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THE NEWSPAPER FOR MAIDSTONE, MALLING, LARKFIELD AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES



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CAMPAIGN SWITCHES TO KRAFT

DETERMINED campaigners are ready to fight a second developer's plans to build on a rural beauty spot.

Thousands joined forces with the county and borough councils and other groups to defeat AXA's plans to build the Kent International Gateway (KIG) freight depot in Bearsted.

These jubilant protesters are now preparing to go head-to-head against the Kent Rail and Freight Terminal (KRAFT) proposals earmarked for countryside between Borough Green and Wrotham. Campaign group

■ BY JOE BILL

Protect Kent has vowed to fight the plans for a 250-acre road-to-rail freight interchange on green belt land partly classified as an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB).

Deputy director Sean Furey said: "We're ready for them – most of the arguments against KIG apply to KRAFT. There's no justification for this scheme."

"It's in the green belt and partially on land which is an AONB, so it will be tougher for them than KIG to get planning permission."

"We are continuing to raise awareness of the scheme, but have to wait for the backers of KRAFT to make their next move."

"Are they going to commit a lot of money to this, or are they going to back away quietly?"

KRAFT spokesman Colin Wilkins said they were pleased that the KIG proposal had been denied.

"We welcome this decision. It's clear the weaknesses in the KIG application have been recognised," he said.

"We're reviewing the full details of the decision and remain optimistic about our own proposals."

• For the full KIG report, turn to page 3



RIDING HIGH IN OUR BACKYARD

The world's best BMX riders will converge on Maidstone for the UK's first Red Bull Backyard Digger event. The two-wheeled tournament will take place on dirt bike racetracks set to be dug out at Mote Park.

Rider Kye Forte said: "We're really stoked about Red Bull Backyard Digger hitting the UK for the first time. We've been up and down the country looking at impressive applications, but the Maidstone boys really pulled it out of the bag and we can't wait to get started."

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE PAGE 5

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Thieves make hay with bales after price hike

■ BY JOE BILL

WORRIED farmers are experiencing raids on their hay stocks after a shortage of the crop has forced the price of bales to rise.

An extra warm spring this year has led to a 25 per cent fall in the crop and thieves have taken to stealing bales rather than pay more for them.

Director of the Kent Life farm park, John Jordan, is concerned about his own crop after two of his 'giant bales' were stolen.

He said: "The hay crop is down by 25 per cent, and this has meant that the hay bale prices have gone up from £3 last year to £5 a bale this year. When you consider a farm like ours goes through 2000 bales a year, that extra cost adds up to an awful lot of money."

"It has been simple climatic issues and as any garden owner will tell you, grass needs rain to grow."

Last week the team at Kent Life were visiting their two Shire horses in the paddock only to find that the two large bales, which were 15 times the size of normal ones, had been snatched.

The farmers have even had to take extra measures to protect their hay crop by putting up CCTV around the farm.

Mr Jordan, who has been in charge of Kent Life for five years, said: "I have spoken to other farmers and they have personally said they have had hay stolen in the countryside. Police have told us to be extra vigilant at the moment."

"This is serious for us because at Kent life we are short of grazing areas and the hot weather means there is even less grass for the horses and cattle to eat."



Picture: PHIL HOUGHTON

LAST STRAW: Farmers are experiencing hay thefts after bales prices increase

es and cattle to eat."

John Jordan and the team will now have to go out and buy more hay to keep the animals fed throughout the winter months.

He added: "We have a herd of five Sussex cattle, each of which have calves every year. There are two Shire horses, and we also have other dairy cows which come in as well as donkeys."

"All in all that is a lot of mouths to feed."

Kent Life is set to hold a beer and hop festival to raise funds to buy the extra food for the cattle.

The event will run on Saturday, September 11 and Sunday, September 12. The team will be brewing its own 'Cobtree Mild Ale'.

There will also be a wide range of common ales on sale and there will be two music stages featuring a variety of live bands throughout the weekend. Plus every visitor gets a free pint of beer. Gates open 10am until 8pm on Saturday, and 10am until 6pm on Sunday.

Helpful motorist is urged to help police

A GOOD Samaritan who drove an injured man to hospital is being urged to come forward.

The motorist picked up the stricken man somewhere between Mereworth and Tonbridge on Sunday, August 1, before taking him to the Kent and Sussex Hospital for treatment.

A police spokesman said: "We would like to talk to this person as they may have important information that will help us with our investigations."

Silver Nissan

"We would also like to hear from anyone who knows the whereabouts of a silver Nissan Navara pickup, index number GK58 OCW, or who may have seen it being driven around the area recently."

"This vehicle belongs to the injured man but he does not remember the precise location where he left it."

Call police on 01732 379217 or Kent Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Information can also be emailed directly to appeals.westkent@kent.pnn.police.uk.

Crafty thieves target catalytic converters

BRAZEN metal thieves are targeting cars in town centre car parks, police have revealed.

The criminals steal vehicles' catalytic converters – which can be melted down and sold on as scrap.

Officers said the offenders have taken to stripping the parts from large people carriers and family cars as it has become harder to take the valuable parts from commercial vehicles because of latest security measures.

Vigilant

PC Steve Hobbs who works for Tactical Crime Investigation at Maidstone said: "It seems that those looking to steal these converters have changed tack, as the crime prevention measures we'd put in for commercial vehicles had made them too hard to steal."

"Thieves are blatantly using jacks to lift cars up and then using hydraulic cutters to remove the catalytic converters quickly. I would therefore urge members of the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour in the town centre car parks across Mid Kent."

Cycling Cuba for Kent charity

A MEDICAL secretary from Barming is training for the ride of her life as she prepares to cycle across Cuba to raise money for the Kent Air Ambulance.

Kirsty Bevan will cycle 370 kilometres across the Caribbean island as part of the air ambulance trust's 20th anniversary in November.

The 30-year-old, who works at the Somerfield Hospital on London Road, Maidstone, will be joining 35 other cyclists when they set off on their five day adventure.

The mum of two said: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and doing it for the Kent Air Ambulance makes it all the more worthwhile. It's my big milestone birthday this year and I'll be celebrating it in Cuba and what better way to do that than to help a great cause."



PEDAL POWER: Charity cyclist Kirsty Bevan

Starting from the Bay of Pigs, famous for the US aggression on Cuba in 1961, the team will make their way through towns and villages to Trinidad, a World Heritage Site. They will finish the ride in the Bay of Cienfuegos.

Kirsty is a keen cyclist but has never cycled that distance before: "I

do cycle with friends at weekends, and have cycled the London to Brighton bike ride a couple of times, for fun, but to do a ride of this distance over five days will be quite a challenge for me. I have to raise over £2,600 to do this challenge."

And with a little over two months to go Kirsty has raised nearly £2,000 towards her total.

Family and friends are sponsoring the ride while Kirsty herself has been selling cakes at football tournaments, and gathering donations from local companies that she knows.

Kirsty has also organised a non-uniform day at her Barming Primary School, where her eight-year-old son Joe is a pupil.

If you want to support Kirsty, you can sponsor her by visiting www.justgiving.com/kirstybevan.

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Celebrations as KIG rejected

■ BY JOE BILL

CONTROVERSIAL plans for the Kent International Gateway to be built in rural Maidstone have been sensationally scrapped.

Delighted campaigners last week celebrated news that the 250-acre road-rail freight interchange has been thrown out by the government.

Communities Secretary Eric Pickles refused an appeal by developers AXA, which had planned to build the giant industrial site next to the rural village of Bearsted at junction eight of the M20.

Kent County Council, borough councillors, MPs and local people joined forces to fight the KIG proposals in March 2007.

KCC leader Paul Carter said: "The Government has made the right decision by rejecting this scheme. This is a victory for common sense."

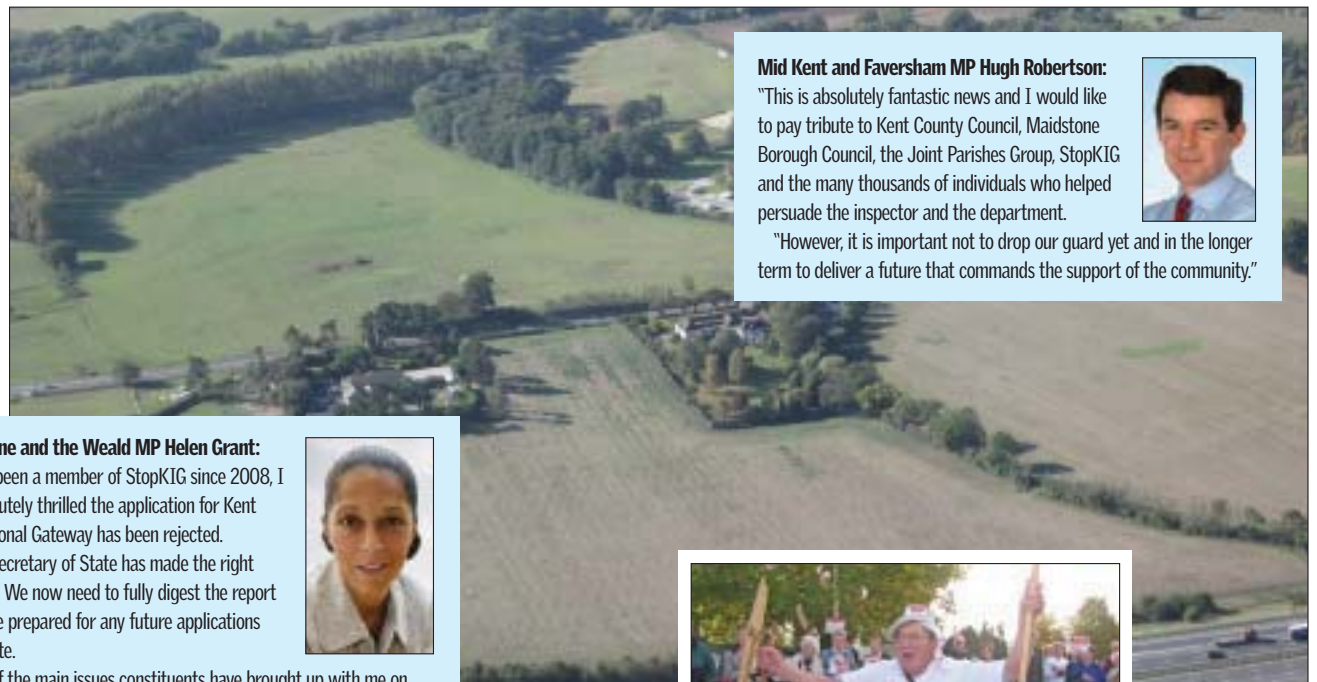
"The Kent International Gateway was a non-starter. It would be a travesty for a rail freight depot of this scale to go at the foot of the Kent Downs, one of our most treasured and protected sites."

"I would like to pay tribute to the residents' Stop KIG campaign and the many individuals and organisations who objected to this scheme, and gave evidence at the inquiry."

"By supporting Maidstone Borough Council with strong community resolve and the county council's evidence, we have together won the battle to convince the Government and achieved the result we all wanted."

"We will be studying the details of the planning decision and the new Government's approach to this form of development."

Borough council leader Chris Garland added: "This is a great result for the borough. The council is



Maidstone and the Weald MP Helen Grant:

"Having been a member of StopKIG since 2008, I am absolutely thrilled the application for Kent International Gateway has been rejected."

"The Secretary of State has made the right decision. We now need to fully digest the report so we are prepared for any future applications on this site."

"One of the main issues constituents have brought up with me on the doorstep over the last two and half years is how strongly they feel about protecting our beautiful countryside. I am delighted with the outcome of the enquiry."



involved in stopping the proposed industrial estate that would have sat between the picturesque villages

of Bearsted and Hollingbourne. Campaigns officer for the party Stuart Jeffery believes AXA should be looking to start more environmentally friendly projects.

He said: "This is a very welcome decision. Big business cannot be allowed to run roughshod over the will of local people or destroy such a beautiful and useful rural area."

"Let us hope this matter has now been put to rest and that AXA turn their attention to funding projects which will reduce impact on the environment rather than destroying it."

"There is a real need for funding of renewable energy, energy reduction and to help local economies, AXA should really think about investing in projects which will

Mid Kent and Faversham MP Hugh Robertson:

"This is absolutely fantastic news and I would like to pay tribute to Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council, the Joint Parishes Group, StopKIG and the many thousands of individuals who helped persuade the inspector and the department."

"However, it is important not to drop our guard yet and in the longer term to deliver a future that commands the support of the community."



the site would attract some 6,000 vehicles and only three trains per day. AXA had stated there would be up to 19 trains a day.

help us now and in the future."

The KIG application was originally dismissed by Maidstone councillors after research carried out by council experts found that

The council felt KIG would significantly harm the countryside and Maidstone residents through its 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, operation.

Refusal opens the way for KRAFT

BOSSSES behind the Kent Rail and Freight Terminal said their proposal will succeed where KIG plans failed.

The KRAFT team, made up of CEMEX UK, Borough Green Sandpits owner Roger Body and other adjoining landowners, said their Borough Green site is more suitable.

The partners' planned 250-acre terminal will be built on sandpits and quarries between the A25 and junction 2a of the M26.

KRAFT planning consultant Jonathan Bolton told this paper: "KRAFT is better located than KIG – it has access to the Maidstone East railway line and the M20, M25 and M26 and KIG is only really near the M20."

"KIG has been squeezed into a triangle shape whereas we have room here to expand and develop."

If given the go-ahead, KRAFT would include an integrated rail and road transport hub, an aggregates depot, warehousing and associated commercial property, including general storage space, and office accommodation.



DIFFERENT: Unlike KIG, KRAFT is proposed to be built on some already developed land

It would also include a Borough Green bypass, which was first suggested by Kent County Council, to ease traffic congestion through the surrounding villages.

Simon Barratt, a properties director at CEMEX UK, said: "KIG never really had a face put to it and did not include the public."

"KRAFT has made sure we are in

touch with the community to incorporate their point of view – we have already changed the plans several times because of people's concerns."

"The site for KRAFT is already an industrial site, will create 2,000 jobs for the community and will include the Borough Green bypass which lorries and HGVs will use instead of travelling through the smaller roads."

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EASY RIDER: Professional bike rider Kye Forte will bring the Red Bull Backyard Digger event to town

Red Bull biking event comes to your Backyard

EXTREME sports are heading to Maidstone with new dirt bike racetracks set to be dug out at Mote Park.

Whether you are into big jumps or mud racing, the Red Bull Backyard Digger event will have something for all BMX and bike fans.

It will be the first time the Backyard Digger show has visited the UK from the United States and bike fans have three lads from Maidstone to thank for it.

Alex Tenters, James Walton and Alex Brown worked with Maidstone Borough Council to find a good spot to place the track and then applied online to host the Red Bull event.

Delighted

UK-born professional BMX rider Kye Forte is delighted to have the show coming to this country.

He said: "We're really stoked about Red Bull Backyard Digger hitting the UK for the first time.

"The lads and I have been up and down the country looking at some super-impressive applications, but the Maidstone boys really pulled it out of the bag and we can't wait to get started."

The bike jam could be heading to Mote

BY JOE BILL

Park as soon as September, but Maidstone Council are waiting to see if building restrictions come into play.

A council spokesman said: "We are waiting to see if planning permission is required for the track. If it is, then it won't be happening until next spring."

The extreme sports news comes after Maidstone skateboarder Stephen Bates announced that he will be skating from his University in Nottingham to the town to raise money for Leukaemia Research, a condition from which he has recently recovered.

Talking to boarding website www.loven skate.com, Stephen said: "After the first year of university, in 2006, I was diagnosed with leukaemia and had a year out for main treatment and then went back to study while still receiving some treatment.

"I only finished treatment in September 2009 and just graduated in July.

"It's a fitting challenge to raise money for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research. I'm aiming for around 30 miles a day in three, three-hour sessions each day."

Stephen believes the challenge will take around a week to complete, starting on the Tuesday, August 10.

To make a donation, visit www.justgiving.com/SkatingSteveee.

before exposing himself.

The man then left the property and may have driven away in a red car.

The impersonator has been described as black, around 6ft and in his early 20s.

He has black hair and was wearing black trousers, black loafers, a black leather belt and a shirt. He was also carrying a clipboard with paperwork of SE England on it.

Anyone who may recognise this description or who may also have been approached by the man at that time is asked to contact DC Nicola Mullins at Maidstone Police on 01622 604210 or call CrimeStoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Flasher poses as gas board official

POLICE are hunting a man who posed as a gas board official before exposing himself to a shocked homeowner.

The flasher knocked at the door of a house in Tentern Road in Maidstone and asked to see the meter at noon on Monday, July 26.

After the man was shown to the meter he ignored it and started to make suggestive comments to the female occupant

Beat those credit crunches at town's 'most affordable' gym

WE have all had to tighten our belts a little during the recession, but a new gym in Maidstone is set to help all of us tighten up even more.

The new Trugym will be opening its doors at the Broadway Shopping Centre in the second week of September and owner Parm Singh is pledging to make it affordable for everyone.

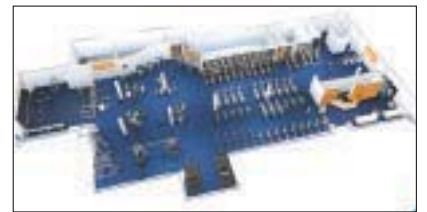
He said: "In the current economic climate, many gym-users are finding the cost of other gym memberships very expensive, cancelling due to affordability.

"Trugym now offers complete gym access for as little as £14.99 a month and during the pre-opening offer, they are also offering no joining fees. This is the most affordable gym in Maidstone."

Equipment

The gym will be fitted out with more than 100 stations of the latest fitness equipment so members will cut down on waiting time.

My Singh added: "Trugym believes there should not be any barrier to prevent people



WORKING IT OUT: An artist's impression of the Trugym

from joining.

"Hence, not only do they offer a low flat fee and no joining fees, but their members are not tied into long 12- or 18-month contracts. Members are not under contract, so have the freedom to join and cancel when they want."

Prospective members can also take a virtual tour of the new gym online as well as park for free at the Broadway Shopping Centre.

The offer price will end on Tuesday, August 31. To join the Trugym online, visit www.trugym.co.uk or call 0844 567 2727.

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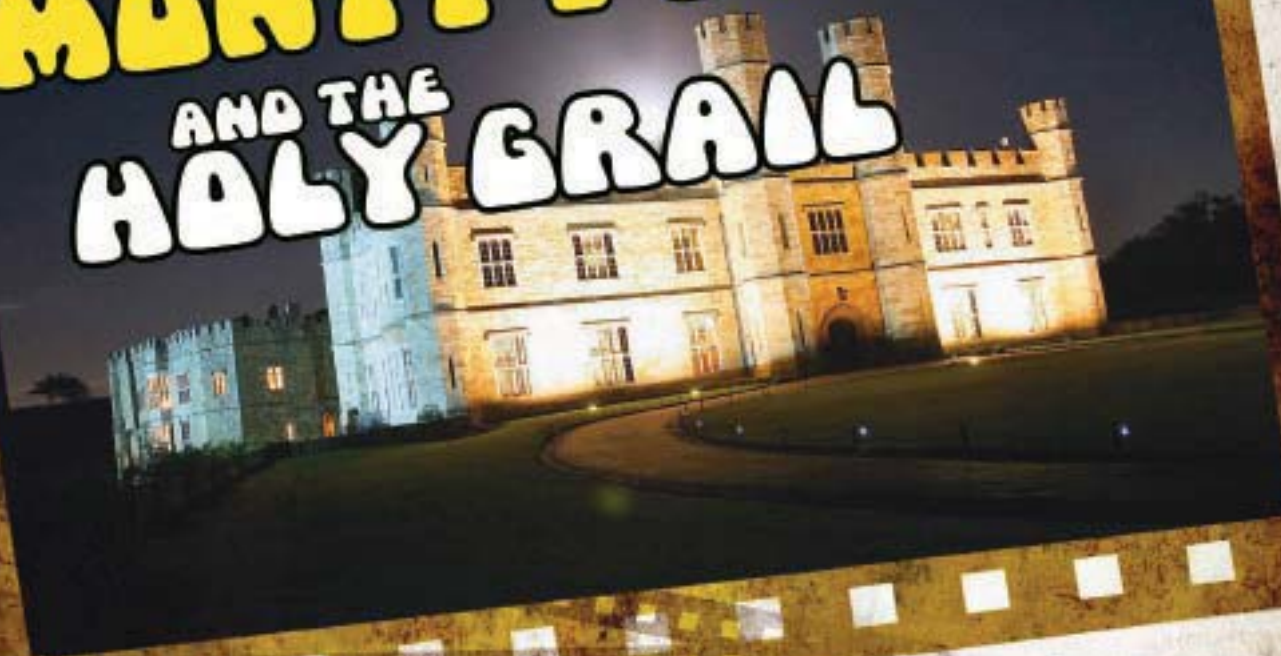
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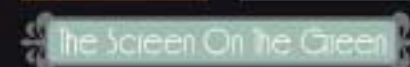
How to book

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Call **01622 880008** weekdays from 1st March, 10am - 5pm.

Booking fee of £2.50 applies to all orders.

Key to the Castle tickets are not valid for this event.



Kelsie gets funding for Paralympic goal

A YOUNG athlete from Maidstone has been awarded a sports bursary for the excellence shown in her discipline.

Kelsie Gibson, 16, has been competing at adaptive rowing for only a year but has already made her name winning the Kent Adaptive Indoor Championships and is now competing for a place in the Great Britain Senior Team.

The 16-year-old was born with amniotic band syndrome leading to the loss of two fingers and restriction of movement in her hands and legs, but Kelsie is determined to compete at the 2012 Paralympic Games.

Adaptive Rowing is a boat race held over 1,000 metres, performed by teams of male and females.

At a presentation evening in London, 35 young athletes were presented with extra funds from the Jaguar Academy of Sport to help them on their way to sporting success.

Athletes aged between 14 and 24 were put forward by the charity SportsAid, with the final decision made by ambassadors of the academy, such as Colin Jackson CBE, Jamie Baulch and Kent sports star Dame Kelly Holmes.

Dame Kelly said: "As part of the SportsAid alumni, I have myself seen the benefits of funding and know it can make a real difference."

Kelsie spends 10 hours a week on the water but it will all be worth it if she reaches her aim of Paralympic Gold.



GAME GIRL: Kelsie

Thieves jailed for two-year burglary spree

TWO serial burglars have been jailed for 30 months each following a two-year crime spree that included more than 60 "night-time creep-er" offences.

Neil David Elstone, 23, of Warrior Square, Manor Park, London, and 25-year-old Christopher Scott Anderson of Harrier Way, East Ham, Beckton, pleaded guilty to 69 crimes committed in Maidstone, Bearsted, Medway, West Kent and Essex.

The pair are responsible for a string of break-ins between April 2008 and May 2010.

PC Tim Murrell from the Tactical Crime Investigation Department at Maidstone said: "The way the pair entered the homes was always the same - targeting homes with PVC doors where they could overcome the lock."

"They would then carry out a quick search of the ground floor, stealing any items which could be easily carried. Their main focus was car keys, however, as they could then steal the often expensive vehicles off the driveways."

Police caught up with the pair when they

■ BY JOE BILL

were stopped during a routine vehicle check. Officers found the car they were travelling in had been stolen earlier that night.

An in-depth investigation then followed with the offenders being taken on numerous drives around the county so they could point out the properties they had visited.

PC Murrell added: "This was a complex but satisfying investigation, as it allowed us to wrap up many previously unsolved crimes."

"We're pleased with the result as the pair have been brought to justice for this litany of crimes."

Recorder Sarah Morgan sentenced the pair at Maidstone Crown Court on Tuesday, August 3.

Elstone pleaded guilty to seven counts of theft of vehicles, 15 counts of burglary and attempted burglary, driving whilst disqualified and driving with no insurance. He also asked for a further 21 offences to be taken into consideration.

Anderson pleaded guilty to seven burglaries from households and asked for 17 similar offences to be taken into account.



SENTENCED: Christopher Anderson, top, and Neil Elstone were jailed for more than 60 offences in Kent and Essex

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yourlocalinterview

QUESTION & ANSWER

BEN SHERREARD



Q How did you first become involved in the Maidstone Borough Council?

A Like most of my friends, I left University with a reasonably good degree (in Psychology and Politics) and no idea what to do with it!

I had joined the Conservative Party in my final year at uni when David Cameron won the leadership election so I just started volunteering in Ann Widdecombe's office as she was the MP for Maidstone then.

I was asked to stand at the upcoming election and I found out Loose Ward was up that year. Having grown up in Loose it was the only ward I wanted to stand in. To my surprise I was elected! I was extremely fortunate to get in on my first try.

Q Can you tell us a bit about your No Ifs, No Butts crack-down?

A So much money is spent every year on cleaning the streets. This is an idea to help prevent the rubbish getting there in the first place. Dropping litter costs money, harms the environment and gives a really negative impression of a place.

This new enforcement activity is designed to stop people littering by fining those caught dropping litter including cigarette ends.

The fine is £75 which may seem steep but we really are serious about stopping people ruining Maidstone for everyone else by littering everywhere.

Q Where would you like to be in five years time?

A If pure selfishness were allowed I would love to be running a small self-sufficient farm on the West Coast of the Scottish Highlands. But in reality I would love my photography business to be thriving and have the beginnings of my own family.

Q Have you got any hobbies outside of politics?

A I flit from one to another with alarming speed. On the plus side there are always plenty of ideas for birthday presents!

At the moment I am getting into sailing and I have my own photography business called Giggles Photography. I love taking pictures of individuals and families. Other than that I play golf and most other sports, but none well. I am also a huge film fan.

Q What has been the proudest moment in your job?

A I am new to the Cabinet and unfortunately the economic situation doesn't leave much room to move in.

However I was chairman of the regeneration overview and scrutiny committee for two years.

I am a huge advocate of the role scrutiny plays in the council and I was proud to chair on the first Councillor Call for Action meetings. Residents were having real trouble with

issues on land that could not be adopted by the council as a couple of developers seemed to be dragging their heels. The meeting managed to sort out a lot of the problems and the public left the meeting much happier. The whole thing was a great example of the Ward Member, Scrutiny Committee, officers and residents working together.

Q Who was your childhood hero and why?

A There are a couple. There is a famous golfer called Ernie Els. He comes across as a really good guy and he plays the game so well. He has always had an elegant swing.

But for sheer childhood fantasy it would be someone like Indiana Jones. I have always loved films and books – any form of escapism really. I had, and still have, quite an imagination when I was growing up so I could get totally absorbed.

Pair that with an innate sense of adventure and Indiana Jones was my hero.

Q If you could have any other job in the world what would it be and why?

A Perhaps a director of photography for Ridley Scott. His films always look stunning. I have always wanted to be a novelist. I have a few ideas that I think would make books but neither the time nor ability to make anything of them. We'll see though – it may happen one day.

Q&A

The Maidstone Borough Council Cabinet Member for the Environment, who is pushing for a zero tolerance to dropping litter, talks to **Joe Bill** about his No Ifs, No Butts campaign, his hobbies and his childhood hero

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Grant welcomes Troopers' Mums



FROM LEFT: Ann Cook, Mary Napper, Helen Grant MP, Sandra Marsh and Ruth Meehan

MOTHERS of military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan visited Parliament to give their views on the support available to families.

Four women from the Troopers' Mums network met Maidstone MP Helen Grant to discuss what could be done to make sure families are looked after while their loved ones are away.

Mrs Grant said: "It was an honour to meet the Troopers' Mums and hear about the support they are providing, both to our men and women serving overseas and to each other."

Supported

"While our troops serve their country, we need to ensure the families are supported as fully as possible."

Mrs Grant is vice-chair of the army sub-group of the all-party parliamentary group for the armed forces. She said measures ought to be in place to help parents of servicemen support their children, allowing them to reintegrate and adjust to civilian life on their return.

The Troopers' Mums Operation Yuletide charity raised £2,000 last year to send packages to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Police on the hunt for new canine recruits

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

KENT Police is appealing for new canine recruits for its highly skilled dog unit.

The force currently has 50 working dogs at any one time but is always on the look-out for more police puppies to join the team in case of injury or illness.

In previous years the force has recruited dogs from people who are no longer able to look after the animals and they have been given as gifts.

Sergeant Tony Dyer of the dog unit said: "Kent Police can offer these dogs a good home and a stimulating and exciting environment."

"The breeds we use for police work are full of energy and require a lot of attention and stimulation as they are intelligent animals. Some owners find it difficult to cope with such dogs, but by training them to work as police dogs they have daily activity to keep them focussed."

"All the dogs in our unit live and work with their owners and enjoy a wonderful life."

The breeds that Kent Police usually train as working dogs are German shepherds and malinois for patrol work. Labradors, retrievers and spaniels are used as detection dogs, although cross breeds with the correct temperament may also make good police dogs.

Sgt Dyer said the Dog Unit had brought a great deal to the force: "The dogs are a huge asset to Kent Police and their work is invaluable."

We have enjoyed great success thanks to using these highly trained dogs. We have been able to find missing people by dogs following their scent and our dogs are a valuable tool in identifying drugs, weapons or explosives.

"The animals enjoy their work and are given plenty of rewards of their efforts."

"Often the dogs that make the best police dogs have more energy than most owners can cope with, and may be destructive because they are not getting enough stimulation."

"We are not always looking for the biggest German shepherd. It is not so much what they look like, but how they are as an individual and their ability to take on the role of a police dog which proves their suitability."

The force currently operates a puppy scheme that provides it with some of the requirements, in addition to buying from recognised breeders.

Members of the public also offer their pets as potential police dogs.

For every 100 dogs, Kent Police may only take one because of the requirements for the role. The dog section are always looking for potential police dogs, known as 'gift dogs', these are usually donated by members of the public, re-homing kennels or guide dogs for the blind. Dogs must be no more than two and a half years old.



DOGGY DETECTIVE: Snoop the police dog needs some new colleagues to help with his workload

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If you think your dog might be suitable for the police Dog Unit then please email kentpolicedoggifts@kent.pnn.police.uk.

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Get on board in rail service discussions

RAIL-users are being urged to unite with politicians and pressure groups to push for improvements to Kent's train service.

It follows a meeting between transport minister Theresa Villiers and Kent County Council's cabinet member for highways Cllr Nick Chard about problems caused by the High Speed One (HS1).

Cllr Chard is now calling on passengers to help create a united front to press the Government for better services.

"The rail franchise in Kent is due for renewal in 2012, or 2014 if Southeastern is granted an extension," he said.

"Work needs to start now if we are going to shape the future of our rail services.

Since the new HS1 timetable was fully rolled out in December, services for the north and east of the county, Maidstone, and Deal, have been plagued by problems.

Some of the 'classic' slower services running between Maidstone and the City were cut and passengers from areas including Thanet and Herne Bay found they were paying more money for a reduced, poorer service on the conventional lines.

At times, some passengers returning from London to Margate found it took two hours, instead of one hour 35 minutes.

"That's slower than in 1927," said MP Roger Gale, who has campaigned for better services since HS1 was introduced.

"When the HS1 is running late, the classic service is stopped and held back – the passengers on the reduced, overcrowded classic service have to watch as the almost empty HS1 goes past.

"The service along the Kent coast is slower, £13 more expensive for a day ticket and only takes people to St Pancras.

"The original timetable needs to be brought back for the people who are travelling to other London stations like Cannon Street, London Bridge or Victoria," he said.

"Modern signalling needs to be brought in so trains can move on both sides of the track. The so-called fast train can't actually move at high speed along the Kent coast until it passes the Medway towns."

A rail summit was held at County Hall in March to discuss the situation and another one for later this year is being organised.

Cllr Chard said: "It is so important that rail-user groups come forward. We need a united Kent voice and I want people to make a contribution by saying what they think is needed."

To get involved or make a comment, email nick.chard@kent.gov.uk.



Theresa Villiers

Police dogs 'bite' 50

KENT Police dogs have bitten almost 50 people in the past 15 months, according to new figures.

Of that number, four victims were innocent members of the public caught up in police chases and, in one case, a missing person search. Four police officers were also bitten,

But the majority of those bitten were suspected criminals and in almost half the cases were being pursued by police.

Crimes included burglaries, stolen vehicles, suspected arson, fights and in one incident threats to an officer.

From January 2009 to June 2010, 49 people were bitten by police dogs, causing injuries such as puncture marks, grazes and scratches.

In some incidents the dog gripped a person's clothing – which has to be reported as a bite – or there was no injury sustained.

In the four cases of members of the public being bitten, one reported a puncture wound

■ BY MARIJKE COX

to the ankle, two reported reddening arms and one claimed to have been bitten on the arm.

The 41 suspects – one of whom was a violent prisoner and another wanted in connection with violent assault – complained of either puncture wounds, bruising or bite marks.

Since 2005, six claims have been made against the police regarding dog bites – three are now dormant, one was discontinued, another is ongoing and in one case the claimant received £63 for a ripped jacket.

Assistant Chief Constable Andy Adams said all Kent Police dogs are trained to the national standard.

"Handlers also undergo continuous refresher training throughout the year," he said.

"Police dogs are trained to protect themselves and their handlers from violent attack, and also to chase and detain fleeing suspects.

"They help to arrest more than 1,000 suspects every year."

He said people who are violent towards the dog or the handler, or act in a threatening way may get bitten "as a result of their own actions".

"Our force has one of the leading dog teams in the country and has won national awards at a number of police events."

In all cases except one the breed involved in the reported bites was German shepherd. The one exception involved a malinois, a variety of the Belgian shepherd dog.

The Kent Police Dog Unit performs patrol duties, public order duties, explosives searching, weapon detection, cash detection and fire arms support.



TRAINED: Police dogs

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For more information about the splashing day go to www.thedockyard.co.uk or call 01634 823507.

Oooh, yes, I almost forgot, you can meet Captain Flint, the puffing pirate parrot and if you participate in the games, you could win some great prizes.

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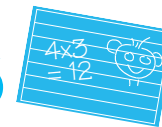
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National award for Mandarin teacher

A MODERN foreign languages tutor from Maidstone has been presented with a national award for excellence in teaching the Chinese language.

Annabel Parker, who is head of Chinese and Modern Foreign Languages at New Line Learning Academy was handed the award by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

Annabel won the coveted Subject Leadership Award during the ninth annual China Conference at The British Museum in London in July.

Head teacher of New Line Learning Academy, Guy Hewett, said: "Annabel is truly outstanding. She has led Mandarin to become the language of choice at the academy and has exported the subject successfully to our sister academy, where she now oversees this department too."

"She has also recruited excellent young Mandarin teachers, runs a hugely successful China week, has led an outreach Mandarin teaching programme in our feeder primary schools and organises our annual student trip to China."

"She has also led us to compete with top public schools at the Mandarin speaking competition."

The Subject Leadership Award is given out to tutors who have made a significant contribution to Chinese teaching in their school and getting pupils to understand the language to a high standard.

Annabel has even organised for ten young teachers to spend three weeks this summer teaching English in Chinese summer schools.

Mr Hewett added: "It is difficult to express how proud I am to have Annabel as a subject leader, because in addition to all these achievements, she is a wonderfully positive, cheerful and caring person who is adored by students and adults."

University professor's film gets cinemas screenings

■ BY JOE BILL

A FILM directed by a professor at the University for the Creative Arts at Maidstone is set to be shown at selected cinemas around the country.

Andrew Kotting, who teaches Video Arts Production at UCA, has created *Ivul*, the story of a teenage lad who abandons his family after an argument with his father and instead decides to live in the trees.

Unfortunately a lack of funding in the UK meant that filming had to move from Scotland to France, the cast and language of the film also turned French.

Andrew said: "I was approached by the BBC about 15 years ago to see if I was interested in developing other projects with them. I pitched *Ivul*, or *Off the Ground* as it was called then, which they commissioned as a screenplay, but the funding soon dried up."

"It is disappointing that British filmmakers can't find funding in their own country, but I must admit, the knock-on effects of *Ivul* taking so long to be realised were ironically very positive because I got to make the film in France, in French, in a landscape which is very precious to me."

The film cost nearly £750,000 to make and is currently showing at the Renai in London, Newcastle Tyneside, Bristol Watershed and the Manchester Cornerhouse.

Ivul is also being shown at the Locarno, London, Chennai and Vancouver International Film Festivals for review during



TREE JUMPER: French teenager Jacob Auzanneau stars as Alex in *Ivul*, a film directed by Andrew Kotting, right. It was originally due to have been made in Scotland, but a funding crisis meant it had to be moved to France

the next few months.

This is the third film that the university professor has created, including *Gallivant* in 1996 and *This Filthy Earth* in 2001.

Andrew is currently working on a 2012 Cultural Olympiad project for UCA's Creative Campus Initiative, in which he will film his journey in a giant swan pedalo from Swan Lake in Hastings to the Olympic site in London.



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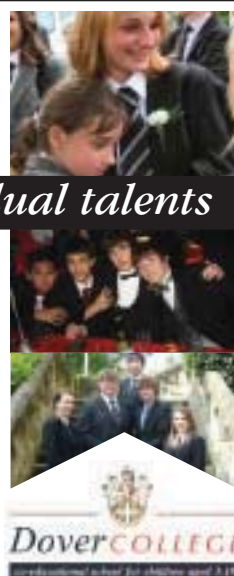
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Births, deaths and lending books

A BIG shake-up in public services could see people registering births and deaths with librarians.

A six-month pilot project is under way at Ashford and Sevenoaks libraries where registration services have been relocated.

Library staff are being trained to register births and deaths, with registrars being trained to become librarians.

The changes are part of a scheme looking at how the services can be delivered together.

It comes after Kent County Council revealed it has to make £15 million in savings this year as a result of coalition Government cuts.

Although concerns have been raised by Unison, KCC said the trial would help look at

■ BY MARIJKE COX

the best way to deliver registrations.

"It will give us an opportunity to test how the services can work together to provide customers with better access at a more convenient and familiar location," an official said.

"We also want to explore how we can make the most of our premises and staffing resources across the county."

Initial plans saw an over-the-counter service, where people wanting to register a birth or death would have to do so surrounded by library users. Unison argued this would be insensitive for people registering deaths.

David Lloyd, the Kent branch's general sec-

retary, said: "Some people raised concerns about the way in which registrations were to be carried out. They were worried about the practice, where if you were registering a death it would be done over the counter."

"We think we have won on this point and it has been agreed there will be private rooms available for registrations."

Mr Lloyd said although there have been no formal objections to the changes, the merging of services is a concern to the union.

"We've not been made aware of any job losses, but this is something we will keep an eye on. Staff have not objected to changes, but there are worries about what is happening."

"We really need to see how it's all going to work before we bring these up."

Staff involved in the trial have been fully trained, with librarians in birth and death registration and registrars in relevant library duties, including premises management and staff rotas. A spokeswoman said: "The results of the pilot are being assessed and evaluated before any decisions are taken that might impact on staff in the longer term."

"Any changes to the terms and conditions and jobs descriptions of staff will be subject to full consultation with the unions and staff."

She added: "The Kent Registration Service has been offering birth and death registration at a number of locations for some time, including Gateways and hospitals."

A survey is being carried out to gather feedback from the public.

My 'Massive' debt to Kent

RESPECTED rap producer Lewis Parker says he will never forget his Kentish background, despite leaving the country in his quest for fame and fortune.

Years before moving to New York to work with some of the biggest names on the American hip-hop scene, a then teenage Parker developed his own style while living in a house opposite Canterbury's St Lawrence cricket ground. And despite now living thousands of miles away, the 33-year-old insists he is still a member of the 'Westgate Massive' that took its name from the historic towers in the city.

"When I lived in Kent the majority of people I knew were into hip-hop," he said. "I really embraced that and that's where my style was formed. Most of my friends were DJs, record collectors or MCs, and when my first record came out it was all about representing the Westgate Massive and giving them shout-outs. Nobody was representing Kent and Canterbury as hard as I was, and I felt the love back too."

Parker, who attended Chaucer Technology College during his three years in Canterbury, received his big break in 1998 when he released his first LP – *Masquerades and Silhouettes* – through Massive Attack's own record label Melankolic. But after five years, the London-



DOPE RHYMES: Hip-hop producer Lewis Parker

born talent moved to Queens, New York. Parker's career took off and enabled him to work with such stars as Ghostface Killah from the Wu-Tang Clan. "I don't give a damn where I'm living," he said. "I could go the middle of the Amazon and still produce the same dope rhymes I do now. I didn't want to represent just one area. I wanted recognition on a worldwide scale, and that's why I moved to New York – to reach that next level."

"I've always been the underdog and the guy who has an album but no music videos. I've always played the back role and I'm still in that same battle. People in the industry know me and respect me but I'm still fighting to get that recognition."

Last month saw the release of Brooklyn-based MC River Nelson's debut album – *the Rise and Fall of River Nelson* – which was produced by Parker and released through the World of Dusty Vinyl Records.

Parker said: "I was planning to release the album a couple of years ago but it was delayed when I got stuck in the UK. By the time I returned I'd fallen out with my business partner and the album just got stuck in the pipeline. River and I decided to put it out digitally and we're still trying to get some physical stuff done, but we're both very happy with it."

with my business partner and the album just got stuck in the pipeline. River and I decided to put it out digitally and we're still trying to get some physical stuff done, but we're both very happy with it."

Cloned beef 'no problem' for NFU

THE National Farmers' Union in Kent said it has no problems with cloned beef entering the UK's food chain.

It comes after the Food Standards Agency discovered meat from a bull, born using an embryo from an American cloned cow, was sold for human consumption in Scotland.

Experts are divided on the rights and wrongs of the meat being eaten by humans.

The RSPCA wants cloning banned, but an NFU Kent spokesman said: "We understand there is no health risk posed by eating meat from cloned animals. The UK has a world-class cattle identification and tracing system which is monitored by Government authorities including the FSA."

"The 'passport' each animal has also contains genetic details. No cloning can take place in the UK. But in the case of a progeny from a cloned animal, the passport would identify the host dam, which is the mother."

Darren Griffin, professor of genetics at the school of bioscience at the University of Kent, said: "No-one has ever found evidence that cloned meat is in any way dangerous to eat. You should never say never, but I can't see a way that it might be, and there are all sorts of things we should worry about before

this. The issue is that people should be able to know what they are going to put in to their mouths. I think the two issues are getting mixed up here."

Compassion in World Farming said cloning was cruel because "many animals suffer in the pursuit of higher yields because they are stretched to the limits of their physical capacity."

But Prof Griffin said: "To say this is cruel because it physically affects the animal is stretching too far. The embryos are implanted and the animals are born in the normal way and, presumably, treated no differently."

The meat entered the food chain after two bulls from the embryos of a cow cloned in the USA were bought by farmer Steven Innes at Newmeadow Farm, near Nairn.

Meat from one was sold on to be eaten after the animal was slaughtered in July, last year.

The second bull was slaughtered in July, this year, but was not allowed into the food chain.

The FSA also said meat from another offspring of a cloned cow had entered the food chain.

The animal, called Parable, was born in May, 2007, and slaughtered on May 5, 2010.

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YOUR LETTERS



Strange lights over the Army barracks

We saw a very bright, static light very high in the sky to the east of Cliffe Woods on Monday, at about 11pm.

At first it looked like a satellite. We have seen this before, about two weeks ago. It was over the Army barracks but this was too high for helicopter manoeuvres. Unless there is a moving satellite, it seemed very strange.

Susan Paradise, Cliffe Woods, comment posted at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

Make nukes history and save billions

Kent Green Party wants the Trident nuclear missile system immediately added to the Government's defence review and list of spending cuts. The most expensive single element of the Government's future defence budget is Trident renewal, at about £97 billion over the life of the system.

Since the coalition, the MoD and the main opposition party are all divided about this expenditure, there is good reason to cancel this spending. Kent Green Party asserts that with this cut, fair taxation and a closure of tax havens, the excessive cuts now hitting front line services could be abandoned.

The implications for public sector employment and household spending with local businesses in Kent would, overall, could keep a lot of people in work.

Continuing on the coalition's present path, as many economists are arguing, will lead to a double-dip recession. Kent Green Party does not accept that nuclear weapons are a deterrent. If this was the case, then Argentina would never have invaded the Falkland Islands. Similarly, Georgia would not have taken the risk that its actions might provoke the Russian Federation, a state with nuclear weapons, to attack.

Nuclear 'deterrence' is a big lie and people should not be paying with their jobs in Kent and Medway to keep Trident or other British nuclear weapons.

Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki this month should be marked by the coalition cancelling Trident as its contribution to reducing nuclear proliferation.

Steve Dawe, Kent Green Party

your blogger

Ian MacMillan explains why the petrol-head's need for speed is neither big nor clever



DRIVING cars and motorbikes fast. Clever or stupid?

Having driven a car safely for more than 50 years, I watched with mounting anger a TV documentary about recently qualified young boy and girl racers.

Statistics show that the arrogant, selfish and ignorant anti-heroes featured are a danger to themselves and others on the road and yet, until confronted by the possible consequences of their antisocial behaviour, they were quite happy – and indeed proud – to race on the road, exceed the speed limit and so on.

They seem to get a thrill out of speed, and the pride comes from the irrational feeling that it is them rather than the car's engine that causes the speed.

As though putting the car in a certain gear and stamping on the accelerator is macho and clever.

Wouldn't it be nice if this antisocial, dangerous and, indeed, childish behaviour was deprecated by all. But, alas, that is not the case.

Certain young – well, youngish – boy racers make a lucrative living by driving cars recklessly and dangerously fast. Jensen Button and Lewis Hamilton to name just two. Money is one thing, but fame is another, and in petrol-head circles, this is best achieved by almost killing yourself.

A middle-aged racer from Kent shot to fame after a spectacular crash in the Indianapolis race and one of the Top Gear trio – the Hamster, I think is his sobriquet – brought out an autobiography on the back of doing something extremely silly.

If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering contact the news editor, **Simon Robinson**, on 01303 817185 or email him on the details above. If you want to be the next Maidstone blogger then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of around 550 words) and email it to the editor. And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town log-on to www.yourmaidstone.co.uk.



'Instant expert' has no idea on pensions

It never ceases to amaze me that people suddenly become experts on situations that are politically motivated. I refer to Gary Wright's blogger on public sector pensions.

He refers to this as if he has inside information, such as working within the Civil Service, which I doubt very much.

However, I can only answer as to my experience as a council worker, of the lower order, who has a pension after 25 years' service.

I had to work for ten years on the council before I could even join the contributory pension scheme. This scheme was offered because all workers like me received lower wages than outside employees.

I never got to 60 to test this so-called retirement age (which I doubt very much for workers like myself) to see if I could retire. I was

retired, like it or not, during the Thatcher years, by the council after 25 years' loyal service, due to privatisation. My pension is certainly nothing like my original wage (as suggested in the blog), more like 25 to 30 per cent of it.

We were entitled to holidays (like everybody else) and to go sick if need be. Most of my workmates never abused this privilege, but appreciated it never the less (this seemed to be a point of contention).

And as for freebies, look to executives and councillors for this, we minnows were constantly reminded where our wages came from. I can only think the blog was, or should have been, aimed at council top dogs – who have little time for trade unions – and who won't lose out, no matter what. Most can walk away with a nice handout, even for failure. All this knocking of pensions will only end up in the lower orders losing out, after all their input, not the top dogs, who are laughing all the way to the bank. The public need to wake up to this one-sided assault on the real working people of our country.

Len Knight, Rainham

No EU support for bloody spectacle

I was delighted to hear that the parliament of Catalonia has voted to ban bull-fighting, despite its place in Spain's cultural tradition.

For a long time I have been concerned by this barbaric practice and

last week was an important step towards the total ban I would like to see. Bull-fighting is a continuation of a cruel age from the past, in which the suffering of animals was a spectacle for public entertainment. These practices continue to reinforce the idea that animals are nothing more than objects we may use at our whim and they have no place in today's Europe.

Since being elected I have received numerous letters objecting to bullfighting. I am determined to make sure no money from the EU is ever used to fund this bloody tradition. I look forward to the day when this ban is extended across the whole of Spain.

Catherine Bearder, Lib Dem MEP for South East England

Social model of care best for new mums

The new report suggesting a greater role for GPs in maternity care comes at a time when maternity services are under close scrutiny and though it makes some useful suggestions, the preferred model of care would be to continue to provide a choice of carer and to actively promote midwife-led care to women.

The current problems in maternity care are caused not by the principle of less GP involvement but rather by the lack of supportive systems to make the role of the lead carer, midwife or consultant obstetrician easier and seamless. A part-

nership needs to emerge between the health professionals involved in the care of pregnant women, when they are well and when they are unwell.

Birth is a normal, physiological process and the majority of women who are healthy, with a straightforward pregnancy, do not require medical involvement either at GP or hospital consultant level.

A social model of care is therefore preferable which is why midwife-led care should be offered to all women. Some women will benefit from the involvement of a GP or require specialist help from dieticians, substance abuse services or social services and some will want to maintain their relationship with their GP. However, many women find getting to know a midwife they can trust and who will be with them thought their pregnancy and birth is vital.

Pregnant women in England currently have a choice to receive their care from their GP or a midwife. The midwife will explain this choice to them when they book their first visit. GP knowledge on maternity issues has fallen behind current evidence and a considerable amount of retraining will be required to enable them to fulfill their role in pregnancy in relation to the health of the woman and baby with medical needs.

Even more training would be required if GPs are expected to deal with the pregnancy and birth and the postpartum period, as a midwife would.

In the current cost-conscious climate, the most effective solution would be for a pregnant woman to book in with a midwife, for the midwife to have her medical records on her first visit, and the midwife then informing the GP of the pregnancy of one of their patients. Where there are pre-existing medical problems, the woman should be referred by the midwife to the appropriate service, which may be the GP or may be other services.

Belinda Phipps, chief executive, NCT

'Sea dogs' top family tree wish list poll

Independent research reveals the people of Maidstone are fascinated by their family history, with 64 per cent planning to find out more and 46 per cent stating they would start by asking their grandparents.

When asked what they would most like to find, 22 per cent said a naval war hero and 21 per cent an aristocrat. Of least interest are modern celebrities, with just 11 per cent hoping to discover one as a distant relation.

Eight per cent of those who have already researched their family tree have discovered a naval hero, ten per cent have heard family tales of one, and one per cent claim to hearing of a pirate in the family. The value placed on grandparents is substantial. Almost two thirds (64 per cent) claim their grandparents are heroes, 19 per cent are named after them, and 53 per cent plan to name their children after them.

Sarah Pace, Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum, by email

Reward for urban foxhunters' capture

Price correct as at 2 August 2010. Flights available to book now for travel between 2 August and 30 October 2010. Variable charges for hold baggage apply and some payment methods attract a handling fee. See website for details.

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DAY & NIGHT

Splurge out for summer

PARENTS and children can get involved in art and craft activities at the Summer Splurge every Friday in August.

The sessions for four to 11-year-olds run at All Saints Church in Magpie Hall Road, Chatham, from 10am to noon and entry is 50p. To book call 01634 338833. For details of children's activities go to www.allsaints.childrenscentre.org.

Life advice for teens

YOUNG people will have the chance to ask questions about any aspect of life when the SOS Bus tours Medway.

From sexual health and drugs to getting back into education, there will be help on hand until August 25. Free chlamydia screening will be available.

For details of the tour visit www.medwaycsp.co.uk.

Live jazz with Donn

ENJOY an evening of live jazz with the Donn Barcott Band in Gillingham tomorrow.

The band performs at the 44Two Club in Featherby Road on the second Thursday of each month, from 8.30pm to 11pm. Refreshments are available. For more information call the Jazz Line on 01634 405037.

Make art from rubbish

LEARN how to make bugs and flowers at Polka Dot Art Centre in Teynham.

Litter Angels' workshops are at the centre in London Road from 10.30am to 12.30pm on Wednesdays in August. Next week's theme will be pots and masks.

Admission costs £5 include all materials and a drink. For details call 01795 521167 or visit www.polkadotac.co.uk.

Dash out a message

LEARN how to communicate in Morse code at Maidstone Museum.

Visitors can find out how the system works and make their own Morse code message at the museum on Friday, from 10.30am to 12.30pm or 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Admission is free. For details visit www.museum.maidstone.gov.uk or call 01622 602838

Rock for hard of hearing

ROCK music for the hard of hearing is on offer at Earls in Maidstone on Saturday.

The Slug Pixies will be rocking the pub in Earl Street at 9pm. Find out more online at www.slugpixies.co.uk.

For details about the venue call 01622 751286 or go to their website at www.earlsmaidstone.co.uk.

Rock and blues hits live

ENJOY an evening of blues rock covers with Jack Bates Band in Gillingham.

The four-piece band will be at the Live Room in Danes Hill on Friday. Hear tracks by the band online at www.myspace.com/thejackbatesband.

More information about the venue can be found at www.myspace.com/thelive-roomgillingham.



Town Re:bourne at arts festival

RE:BOURNE

Friday, August 13, and Saturday, August 14
High Street, Sittingbourne.

PEOPLE in Sittingbourne can look forward to enchanting experiences at the Re:bourne art and performance event this weekend.

The two-day event will see the High Street transformed into 'a magical travelling space' where anything could happen. Anyone who has ever wanted to catch their own shadow or step into an underwater world will find something to intrigue them during the free event.

Featuring art, light, sound and performance, Re:bourne will focus on the past, present and future of the Sittingbourne area. Every interactive activity has been designed to take place in Sittingbourne and audiences are actively encouraged to join in.

By contributing drawings, writings, movement, questions and ideas, people can give their new ideas and perspectives on the future of the town and borough of Swale.

Re:bourne has been produced by Nimble Fish and Workers of Art, both of whom believe the event will be a positive experience for Sittingbourne.

"Re:bourne isn't just being staged in

Sittingbourne, it's about Sittingbourne," Greg Klerkx, director of Nimble Fish, said. "Every activity was designed for a particular carriage-way, shop, nook and cranny. And everything is interactive."

"We want the audience to join in and contribute new ideas and perspectives to the future of Sittingbourne and the future of Swale."

Workshops

The companies have been working with local artists in workshops and consultations for the last four months, and many of these will be contributing to Re:bourne, sponsored by KOS Media.

"It's clear that local investment in events like Re:bourne offers opportunity for growth, both economically and in terms of how people in a community see themselves and their future," Mr Klerkx said.

"In particular, Re:bourne will engage with unoccupied shop spaces as part of the 'slack space' movement that is sweeping across the UK."

A large group of local artists, performers and arts companies are making contributions to Re:bourne and most of them are based in Swale.

One example of a community contribution to the event is a multi-media experience created

by Risky Business. The mixed ability performance group meets in the Labour Club every week and is organised by Skillnet. Originally designed for people with high support needs, the work has been adapted for Re:bourne.

"Many of the locals feel Sittingbourne is starting to be overlooked and forgotten," said local artist, Dean Tweedy. "This can only happen if we let it and I hope that by making use of empty and unusual spaces, we can raise awareness of the town's heritage and also its developmental possibilities."

The festival will also provide an opportunity for local talent to be showcased, such as interactive art designed by Sioux Peto's Teynham-based company, Polka Dot Arts.

"Working within a festival concept has opened up more opportunities for local artists than we would normally be given," she said.

Other Swale-based contributors to Re:bourne include 795 Arts, Big Fish Arts, Julie Bradshaw, Charlotte Firmin, Nicole Mollett and Sons of Alpha Centauri. There will also be contributions by Ceem Art, Wendy Daws and Georgina Elsom of Medway, Danielle Blyde from Whitstable, Faf Arts from Canterbury, Spyplane, Gary Studley and Vicky Wilson from Herne Bay and the county-wide Kent Cultural Baton.

The free event will run from 2.30pm to 5.30pm on both Friday and Saturday.



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WOMEN seeking men

Guys Text n' Chat. Text in now and chat to local people. Send : CHAT883 To : 65125 (T&Cs below)

FEMALE 51, short brown hair, 5ft 6ins, medium build, likes travel, classical music, seeks male, 45-55 for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380886**

PROFESSIONAL black African female, 45, medium build, no ties, seeks professional, intelligent guy 40-55 for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339917**

JENNY 38, petite, bubbly blue eyed babe, always on the go, WLTM unattached fun male to see what the future brings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340287**

MELANIE energetic young 45, seeks intelligent, understanding man to share exciting nights out and intimate nights in, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340285**

KERRY 39, independent curvy brunette, sensual, tactile, loves cuddles and kisses, seeks cheeky, spontaneous guy to keep her company make her smile again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340283**

EXOTIC green eyed blonde, 45, missing a tall, handsome, affectionate man in her life to share discreet, naughty but fun times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340281**

SOPHIA 19, small, sensual strawberry blonde, green eyes looking for fun and romance with a genuine brown haired, blue eyed male who knows how to treat a girl. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340257**

QILL states beauty, tactile, sun loving brunette, seeks very tall, well built male who's looking for an uncomplicated relationship with a real woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340253**

KIRSTY 21, petite blue eyed blonde, a little shy, looking to share intimate moments with that special understanding someone. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340251**

JANE 25, fun flirty brunette, loves football/bowling seeks bubbly guy to enjoy exciting adventures and adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340249**

LADY 70's, N/S, fit, easygoing, seeks gent to share the good things in life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340027**

RHONA 50, well mannered, polite, tubby, old fashioned, seeks male, 50-55, N/S with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339759**

41YR old slim blonde, seeks kind, reliable male for LTR. Are all the good ones gone? Prove me wrong! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340339**

GLADYS sensual, loving, short hair, likes cooking, seeks Christian gent with no ties for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340025**

WANTED dates & mate! Kim 53, straight, seeks people for socialising, drinking, holidays etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340019**

LINDA larger lady 61, seeks male companionship with own home. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340013**

NICK 43, petite blonde, green eyes, seeks genuine guy for company, fun, friendship and maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339115**

FEMALE single mum, seeks male, 30-45 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339345**

JANET 42, petite brunette, very loving, seeks tall well built passionate older male who can keep up with her vivacious nature but be loved in return. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339733**

ELENA 33, generous warm hearted blonde girl, bubbly and likes to get love to spread her wings with tall good looking older dark haired gent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339731**

SYLVIA 43, beautiful, petite blue eyed blonde, fit and active seeks attractive male to share relaxing nights in with good wine, great company, hopefully more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339727**

ANNA 32, loves male company and looking for fun times, seeks tall good looking guy to sweep her off her feet and just enjoy life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339725**

LINDA larger lady 61, likes tv, gardening, seeks male for time out and company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338857**

52YR old single mum, 5ft 5ins, blonde, brown eyes, kind, caring, smoker, overweight, seeks kind, caring, understanding male who likes history, theatre, cinema, meals out and coach trips. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380578**

JENNY 44, attractive, slim and vivacious, would love to be seduced by an attractive, genuine, loving guy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339703**

CHERYL 40's, beautiful green eyed gal, very loving, seeks tall romantic male who thinks he can satisfy all her dreams. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339701**

LORRAINE 35, lonely voluptuous brunette with s big personality, lots of love to give, seeks lovely older man who can make her feel special again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339697**

SAM beautiful slim brunette, big blue eyes, seeks attractive, intelligent, sporty male who knows how to have fun to sweep her off her feet. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339695**

LIZ 62, 5ft 8ins, retired, seeks tall male of similar age for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380754**

LARGER lady, 61, WLTM solvent gent with own home for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339471**

PETITE lady, early 70's, 5ft 3ins, nice figure, well dressed, likes days out, seeks, meals out, nights in, keep fit, seeks N/S gent 69-74. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339483**

39YR old single mum, blonde hair, green eyes, 5ft 2ins, curvy, likes socialising, pubs, animals, clubs, seeks loyal male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380702**

VAL outgoing, compassionate brunette, enjoys life to the full, seeks someone nice to share good things in, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338931**

LUCY 30, chatty, bubbly brunette, shy until you get to know me, looking for a hunky male to get to know. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338929**

ROMANTIC male needed by Vera, 42, beautiful, sexy brunette looking for fun and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338925**

49YR old divorced female, 5ft 2ins, blonde hair, 3 children, seeks male, 48-52 for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338795**

JULIE 44, medium build, single mum, honest, reliable, seeks slim medium build male, 40-48, N/S. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338563**

BRIGHT bubbly, curvy blonde, bit of a romantic, seeks loving male to share the fun, loving side of life with. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338461**

JENNY 45, slim blonde with big blue eyes seeks special someone to brighten up her days and live up her dreams. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339003**

COME and join me for a bottle of wine in a hot soapy bath! Need to be spontaneous too? Outgoing, confident and good looking! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339001**

JAN 54, little auburn haired bundle of fun, witty sense of humour, looking for uncomplicated fun with a tall dark haired male. Age/status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338933**

SENSITIVE caring female, likes meals out, countryside, coast, driving, gardening, seeks male, 58-64 for caring relationship maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380450**

CAROLE 52, long chestnut hair, attractive, 5ft 4ins, medium build, likes travel, animals, countryside, seeks Scottish male, 42-50 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380448**

FUN young looking, attractive female, 49, GSOH, kind, caring, seeks male, 45-55 for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338267**

BRIGHT bubbly, curvy blonde, bit of a romantic, seeks loving male to share the fun, loving side of life with. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338461**

PASSIONATE nature loving lady, petite with long blonde hair looking for nice guy to spend quality time with and see how it goes. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338433**

ANNE 46, slim, N/S, honest, kind, reliable, seeks slim-medium build male, 42-50 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337247**

SINGLE fun loving female, 47, kind, caring, bubbly, GSOH, likes meals out, pubs, cinema, cooking, walks, seeks male, 39-49 for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338879**

43YR old female, petite, 5ft 1ins, single mum, OHAC, seeks male who is full of surprises, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337351**

PAM 33, pretty, kind, loving brunette seeks funny, laidback male for relaxing fun times with no ties. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337273**

MANDY 40, petite, curvy brunette, big green eyes, seeks someone nice to share lots of cuddles, TLC and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337271**

FRAN young 52, happy go lucky, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338457**

WANTED! Good looking, well built, honest male to make gorgeous curvy brunette, 28, happy again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338455**

SUE 39, petite fun loving brunette, seeks tall, outgoing male who is full of surprises to keep her entertained. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338453**

DIANE 42, petite size 12, loyal, kind, no ties, knows exactly what she wants, seeks attractive, male for fun times, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338435**

DEBBIE 35, fun friendly brunette, lovely figure looking for similar attractive male for adult fun friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338431**

MICHELLE 40, cuddly, bubbly brunette, up for anything, seeking average/well built male who knows how to enjoy life. Maybe with me! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338429**

FEMALE 44, kind, generous, GSOH, genuine, caring, loving, likes animals, cinema, reading, walks, seeks similar male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338379**

LINDA 45, seeks caring, understanding, hardworking gent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338677**

TILLY 52, larger lady, likes swimming, meals out, history, seeks friendly, fun, kind gent with similar interests for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380546**

JUNE slim blue eyed blonde likes a bit of fun seeks tall romantic male to share an intimate gals time at the end of a day. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339095**

PAULINE pretty professional blonde, great curves, life and soul of any party, seeks tall, well built male with passion for life to get together with. Looks/unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339087**

WIDOWER 50's, likes country walks, animals, reading, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337979**

LARGER lady seeks gent, 60's for nights out, friendship and who knows. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338517**

LARGER lady, 61, WLTM caring, affectionate male for nights out, friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338183**

TALL slim, attractive lady, late 60's, genuine, likes socialising, meals out, music, animals, seeks male, 65-70 for company, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380476**

RUTH young 64, attractive, kind, considerate, N/S, likes outdoors, socialising, many interests, seeks male for happy leisure time, friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380086**

MARIE 60, dark hair/eyes, kind, honest, GSOH, varied interests, N/S, seeks gent, 55-62 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336907**

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, GSOH, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336721**

CAROLE petite, slim, long blonde hair, green eyes, attractive, likes sports, nights out, pubs, meals out, cinema, theatre, music, seeks genuine, honest male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337515**

ATTRACTIVE slim blonde, early 60's, GSOH, likes most things, fed up of kissing frogs, seeks genuine, caring male of similar age to share the good things. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336515**

GEORGIE 45, curvy, tactile blonde, bubbly and chatty looking for broadminded, fun loving, mature male. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 335563**

ALI 25, petite with long brown hair and blue eyes, happy personality, knows what she wants, looking for dishy older guy to sweep her off her feet. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 335561**

41YR old female, medium build, likes gym, walks, cinema, meals out, seeks kind hearted gent for fun times, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336161**

SARAH attractive, slim, 5ft 5ins, brunette, likes pubs, walks, travel, seeks male, 30-38 who is caring, exciting, confident and attractive. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337581**

YVETTE 46, attractive, blonde, blue eyes, likes keep fit, seeks younger male with GSOH for serious fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337925**

PAT 64, petite, brown hair, blue eyes, young at heart, N/S, bubbly, likes music, travel, cooking, seeks likeminded gent of similar age for friendship, possible romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337435**

WOULDN'T it be nice? Cheerful female, late 60's, dog owner, likes gardening, walks, conversation, laughter, seeks similar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337601**

MICHELLE 43, long curly brown hair, sparkly green eyes, lovely figure, easygoing and affectionate, WLTM nice man for loving relationship. Age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337853**

KATHY 40ish, passionate, outgoing, adventurous red haired lady looking for a relaxed no strings relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337851**

MICHELLE 40, petite curvy brunette, cheeky and full of fun, seeks funny easygoing male to keep her company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337849**

LOVELY sensual, shapely female, confident and adventurous, seeks experienced male for fun adventures. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336717**

MICHELLE 41, stunning, seductive, dark haired nurse seeking sensitive male who likes a gal in a uniform for lots of off duty fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 336715**

SHIRLEY 74, 5ft 6ins, attractive, N/S, varied interests, seeks similar aged N/S male to share interests and time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337889**

MEN seeking women

Ladies Text n' Chat. Text in now and chat to local people. Send : CHAT883 To : 65125 (T&Cs below)

BRIAN 60, 5ft 8ins, 14st, clean shaven, N/S, OHAC, self employed, seeks mature, busy female to stop some park back into life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337168**

TALL mature, attractive male, seeks slim, petite, naughty but nice, Asian/Oriental lady for fun and friendship. London. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340235**

SAD Sam eyes 44, nice looking, laidback, 6ft 1ins, funny, seeks pretty lady of similar age to rebuild life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340183**

TALL young 82yr old male, likes gardening, countryside, good laugh, seeks female, any age for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380844**

46YR old male, 6ft, long hair, tattoos, likes rock/blues music, down to earth, kind, caring, likes pubs, GSOH, seeks easygoing female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380792**

ATTRACTIVE fit guy, seeks attractive female, 40-55. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339559**

LES 53, 6ft 2ins, fit, active, own hair and teeth, Gemini, likes countryside, socialising, gym, seeks nice female to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380780**

PETER 70, 6ft, N/S, sincere, likes dancing, seeks local female of similar age for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380782**

ATTRACTIVE professional blond male, toned, sporty, seeks Oriental/Asian attractive female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339355**

WIDOWER 70's, solvent, GSOH, likes travel, weekends away, meals out, seeks sincere female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339881**

PASSIONATE male, early 50's, 6ft, dark hair, stocky, easygoing, happy go lucky, seeks fun loving, warm natured female in need of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339739**

JASON 51, 3ft 11ins, 3st, dark hair/eyes, athletic, attractive, N/S, social drinker, seeks slim, white female, 25-35 for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380870**

YOUNG 53yr old male, GSOH, N/S, 5ft 7ins, likes coast, meals out, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340331**

TALL handsome white male, 37, seeks lady, 20-40, any nationality to spice up life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340187**

TALL attractive white male, 45, considerate, caring, cosmopolitan, likes arts, culture, parks, nature, seeks oriental lady for re-warding, relaxed company in London. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340113**

CARING white guy 46, 5ft 11ins, GSOH, loving, likes movies, pubs, walks, sports, seeks N/S lady, 38-50 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340087**

SWEET thing? Male N/S, 5ft 8ins, seeks genuine, attractive female, 30-42 for fun and to enjoy life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 340049**

YOUNG 60's male, seeks unappreciated 45-50's affectionate lady for daytime TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339773**

BLACK male, 47, bubbly, seeks curvy, buxom, pear shaped, voluptuous white female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339455**

21YR old male, tall, dark handsome, seeks female, 18-45 for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339421**

TALL man, mid 50's, refuses to take himself too seriously, GSOH, enjoys light hearted discussion, seeks friendship with woman 42 or younger. Croydon. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337168**

MALE 52, attractive, fun, energetic, 6ft, slim, many interests including cinema, walks, seeks fun lady,

yourleisure

with
JANE CONNOLLY
Email jane.connolly@kosmedia.co.uk



THE TEXAS TENORS

Thursday, August 26, Orchard Theatre, Dartford

THREE outstanding singers proved they were anything but cowboys on America's Got Talent last year.

After their impressive appearance on the TV show, the Texas Tenors are hitting the road to perform for their fans in the UK. Combining smooth cowboy charm with classically-trained voices, the Three Tenors will be performing everything from Nessun Dorma to My Way.

Marcus Collins, JC Fisher and John Hagen are childhood friends who have each enjoyed successful careers as actors and classical singers. Collins has made a number of TV and film appearances, including starring

alongside Bruce Willis in Perfect Stranger. He began to sing at the age of four, inspired by chart artists such as Garth Brooks and George Michael, before training classically at college.

Despite growing up in a Midwest farming community, Fisher developed a love of opera and enjoys introducing audiences to Neapolitan songs and arias.

Hagen is renowned for his performances of the Verdi requiem and is considered a tenor of superb quality.

Tickets cost £20.50, concessions available. Book online at www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call 01322 220000.



GIMME A BREAK!

Various dates, Avenue Theatre, Sittingbourne

ASPIRING stars are invited to prove they have got the X-factor by entering the Gimme a Break! Talent Show.

The judging panel includes John Cowell, brother of pop guru Simon Cowell and last year Tom Cross, an 18-year-old singer and guitarist from Maidstone, picked up the £1,000 cash prize. Now the hunt is on to find the next big talent in Kent.

The event is organised by Ross Friday, who funded it with money he had saved to get married.

Last year the show's voting raised more than £1,000 for

Oliver Fisher Special Care Baby Trust, Cancer Research UK and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

The show is free to enter and is open to acts of any age, background or experience level, whether they are a singer, dancer, comedian, musician, juggler, actor, band or poet.

Auditions will be held on November 7, 14 and 21 and the Grand Final takes place on December 5. To enter, email CountMeIn@RossFriday.com for an application form. Tickets for the final cost £8 in advance and £10 on the day. To book call 01795 471140.



COMEDY CLUB

Friday, August 13, Priestfield Stadium, Gillingham



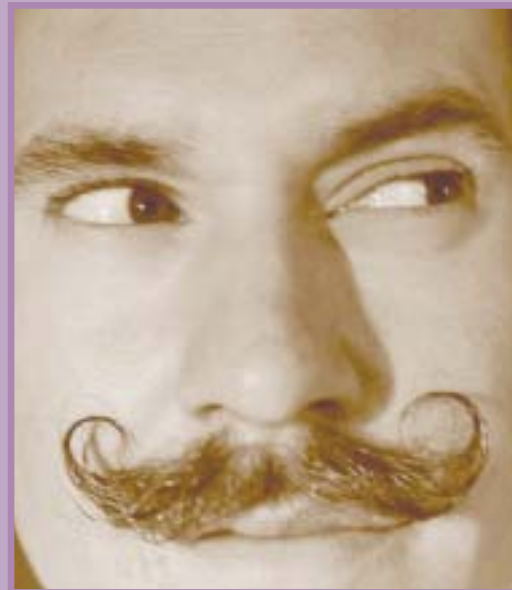
MEDWAY comedy fans have a chance to enjoy a night of chuckles at the Comedy Club this week.

Character comic Dominic Frisby will be keeping things in order as MC, entertaining the crowds with his frank and confessional stand-up comedy. He is a resident on Radio 4's Loose Ends and has also appeared in the film In Love and War, alongside Sandra Bullock, Chris O'Donnell and Sir Richard Attenborough.

Known as real globetrotting comedian, John Newton has travelled from Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi in pursuit of laughs. Although he is quite new on the circuit, his whimsical stories have already won fans and he promises a strange, sometimes tasteless, but always amusing night out.

Headline act Tony Gerrard gives his hilarious perspective on life from a wheelchair, keeping close to his Jewish roots but showing that he can win over any audience with his contemporary material.

Tickets cost £22 including a basket meal or £15 for the comedy only. The over-18s show starts at 8pm. To book tickets call 01634 300000 or visit www.hahaheehee.com for more information.



COMBINED OPS SHOW

Saturday, August 14, and Sunday, August 15, Headcorn Aerodrome, near Maidstone



THRILLING aerial action will entertain the crowds at the Combined Ops Military and Aviation Show this weekend.

The RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight will be marking the 70th anniversary of the dramatic battle with aerial displays, along with the famous Red Arrows.

There will also be a rare appearance by a USAAF Mustang, some of which were based at Headcorn during the war. Battle of Britain Hurricane pilot Anna Walker, the only woman to fly a Hurricane since 1945 and daredevil Mustang fighter pilot Rob Davis will be taking part in the event.

There will also be plenty to enjoy on the ground with more than 300 military vehicles on display. Visitors can take a thrilling ride in a tank and see performances by re-enactment groups. Indian pilot Mahindra Pujji answered the RAF's call for pilots in 1940 and he will be signing copies of his book at the event. More nostalgia is on offer with a 40s fashion show and tea dance, as well as model aircraft demonstrations.

Tickets cost £7/£5 and advance discounts are available. For more information visit www.combinedops.co.uk.

COMEDY CLUB

Friday, August 13, Tudor Park Hotel, Maidstone



TREAT yourself to an evening of live entertainment when the Comedy Club returns to Maidstone.

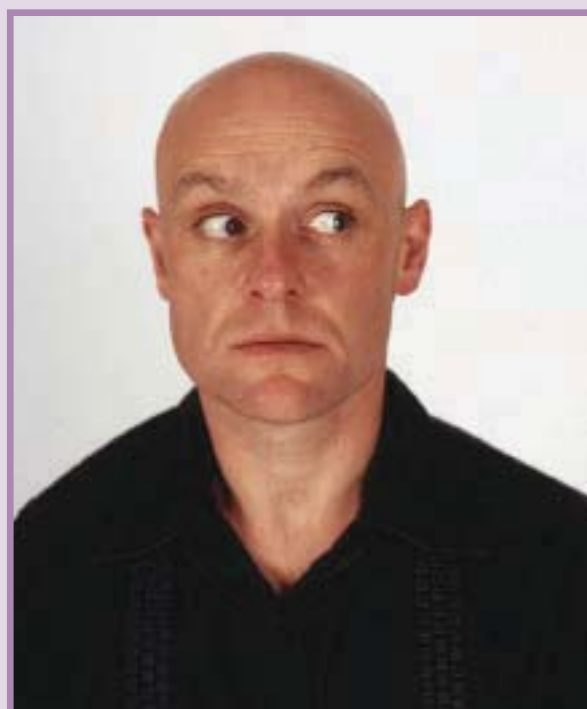
The MC for the night will be Jamie Sutherland, one of the freshest acts to emerge in recent years.

With the ability to appeal to all sorts of audiences, Sutherland combines gags and funny stories with modern, observational material. He was recently chosen to host the Bankhall Annual Conference in the Algarve, which had been previously hosted by the likes of Lenny Henry and Jack Dee.

Experience the dark and intelligent comedy of Stuart Black when he opens the evening. An expert at using language to create vivid images, he gives audiences a comic look at life's mysteries and frustrations.

As well as being a successful stand-up, headliner Eddy Brimson, pictured, also works as an actor and has appeared in Absolutely Fabulous, The Thin Blue Line, Casualty, The Bill and EastEnders. He has also written anecdotal books and appeared in a hit video called Teargas and Tantrums.

The over-18s show starts at 8.30pm and tickets cost £14 or £12 for Comedy Club members. To book call 01622 632006 or visit www.hahaheehee.com for more information.



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Take advantage of the bulk buy service and fill the boot with beer, wine or spirits and save up to 30% off the equivalent UK prices. If you cut out the voucher below you can save even more money. At these prices you can't afford not to go! Plus, you pay in pounds so no need to worry about the exchange rate.

EATING

Whilst on board the Food Court will be able to offer you great quality food at fantastic value prices with meal deals to suit all tastes and budgets. Or you can simply sit back and relax whilst enjoying a Costa coffee on board along with a mouth watering muffin or a slice of cake.

WHAT TO SEE AND DO – If you are looking for ideas on what to do with the kids during the Summer – then look no further! Why not take them to one of these great attractions, all just a short distance from Calais. Visit the website and download the special offer discount vouchers.

BAGATELLE: Visit Bagatelle Amusement Park, just 45 minutes from Calais, situated near Berck sur Mer, south of Le Touquet. The Park has 30 attractions and a new 3D movie show.

AQUALUD: This is one of the largest water parks in Northern France and great fun for all the family. It's situated on Le Touquet Plage, just 45 minutes from Calais. There is a giant pool with waves, slides, Jacuzzis and a solarium. The outdoor section has 3 more pools, flumes and rides.



LA COUPOLE: A secret place hidden in the hills around St.Omer, just 40 minutes from Calais. Visitors can re-live life under Nazi occupation, learn about V2 rockets, view archive footage of WW2 and discover man's conquest of space, a totally memorable and fascinating experience.

PLOPSALAND: Under an hour from Calais, Plopsaland De Panne is an excellent family theme park located on the Belgian Coast. Dive into Pirates' Bay with the SuperSplash, join Mega Mindy in pursuit of the villains on the Flying Bicycles and enjoy a splashing water spectacle in the Jetski.

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Travel 8th August to 31st August - Prices from	£3	£5

Dover to Calais CAR FULL DAY TRIP Car and up to 9 people	Monday - Thursday	
Depart and return before midnight the same day	Web	Phone
Travel 8th August to 31st August - Prices from	£28	£33

Dover to Calais CAR AFTERNOON DAY TRIP Car and up to 9 people	Monday - Thursday	
Depart before midday and return midnight the same day	Web	Phone
Travel 8th August to 31st August - Prices from	£24	£29
Book this offer from today until August 20th and travel Monday to Thursday from tomorrow up to August 31st 2010. Offer excludes Friday to Sunday travel.		

HOW TO BOOK: To book online visit www.poferries.com/kosmedia or call the P&O Ferries reservation hotline on **08716 64 80 01** quoting 'KOS'.

Calls cost 10p per minute plus network extras. Calls from mobiles will be higher.

Lines are open Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm, Sat-Sun and Bank Holidays & 31st December 8am - 6.30pm.

Please make a note of the reference number you are given. Payments must be made by selected credit/debit cards at the time of booking. Bookings made by credit card/cheque are subject to a booking fee. All tickets are collected at time of departure.

Full Terms and conditions available online at Poferries.com: All offers are subject to restricted space, sailings and dates. Once your booking has been confirmed to you, no amendments or refunds will be permitted. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offer only applicable to new bookings. * Free wine voucher will be issued at the port when you check in with your vehicle, and the wine must be collected on your outward crossing. This offer may be withdrawn without prior notice. No bookings will be taken at the port. If you fail to travel on one part of your booking we may charge a supplement. Dover/Calais: If you depart Dover between 19:45 and 5:40am return from Calais between 22:40 and 08:55am, our 'Lite Nights' service means there will be limited onboard facilities but we will offer hot food, onboard bar, bureau de change and offshore shopping.

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Subject to availability - while stocks last. The wine must be purchased on your outward crossing from Dover. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotional offer. This voucher has no monetary value and cannot be exchanged for cash. Voucher valid to 31st August 2010. Offer only applicable to bookings made with KOS Media. Photocopies will not be accepted.

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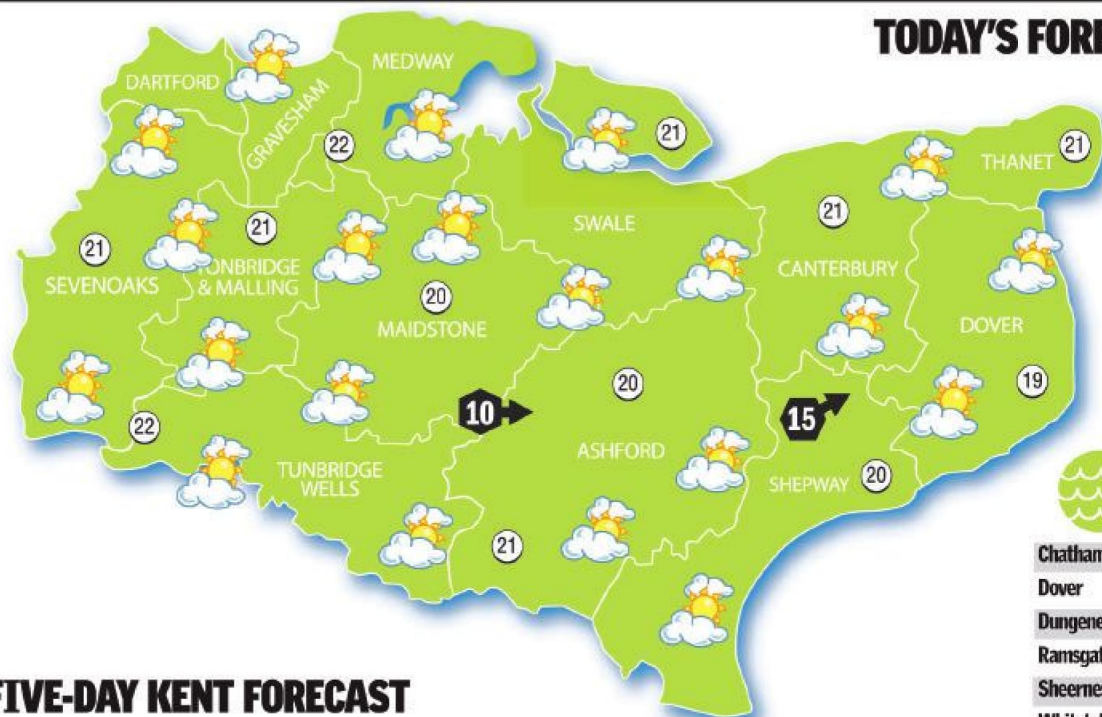
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TODAY'S FORECAST



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	22°C	Madrid	31°C
Athens	29°C	New York	29°C
Barcelona	27°C	Paris	26°C
Beijing	29°C	Rome	29°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	17°C
Cape Town	13°C	Tenerife	25°C
Cardiff	16°C	Tokyo	27°C
Gibraltar	27°C	Vancouver	16°C
Hong Kong	33°C	Warsaw	24°C
Las Palmas	24°C	Wellington	8°C



KENT'S WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	4:32pm 6.5m	Sunday	5:16pm 6.3m
Dover	Saturday	2:54pm 7.0m	Sunday	3:36pm 6.7m
Dungeness	Saturday	2:46pm 8.1m	Sunday	3:30pm 7.8m
Ramsgate	Saturday	3:24pm 5.3m	Sunday	4:06pm 5.1m
Sheerness	Saturday	4:22pm 6.1m	Sunday	5:05pm 5.9m
Whitstable	Saturday	4:30pm 5.7m	Sunday	5:12pm 5.5m

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	18°C	21°C	21°C	19°C	20°C
Canterbury	20°C	21°C	21°C	19°C	20°C
Chatham	19°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Dartford	20°C	23°C	22°C	20°C	21°C

Dover	17°C	19°C	19°C	18°C	19°C
Faversham	19°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Folkestone	17°C	19°C	19°C	18°C	19°C
Gillingham	19°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Gravesend	20°C	23°C	22°C	20°C	21°C
Maidstone	19°C	22°C	21°C	20°C	21°C
Ramsgate	20°C	21°C	21°C	19°C	20°C
Rochester	19°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C

Sevenoaks	18°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Sittingbourne	19°C	21°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Tonbridge	19°C	22°C	21°C	20°C	21°C
Tun Wells	19°C	22°C	21°C	20°C	21°C


SUNRISE 5:33am **SUNSET** 8:26pm

MOONRISE 7:28am **MOONSET** 8:37pm

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From £25.00

Lunch Time Get Togethers

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Christmas Dinner options throughout December from £14.50

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WIN! Levi Roots' new Caribbean cook book

LEVI Roots, who famously slayed the Dragons and whipped the nation into a Caribbean frenzy with his spicy Reggae Reggae Sauce, is back with another cook-book to tickle the taste buds – Food For Friends.

From lip-smacking barbeque recipes to family dishes, Levi's new cook book is packed with more than 100 mouth-watering recipes and showing how to spice up traditional favourites.

Good old Shepherds Pie becomes Caribbean Spiced Shepherd's Pie, pork chops are transformed into Pork Chops Calypso, a simple fish supper becomes Smoked FishChoka and a classic dessert is remodelled into Mango, Banana and Passion Fruit Trifle.

Hundreds of people queued to meet the man himself at the Waterstones store at Bluewater, on the 4th August. But if you didn't make it down there, fear not, Levi Roots signed ten copies of his book, courtesy of Bluewater, Europe's leading retail and leisure destination.

Simply answer the question below for your chance to win this extra special, signed copy of Levi Roots 'Food For Friends', worth £18.99, by Mitchell Beazley:

Q) What is the title of Levi Roots new spicy cookbook recently launched at Waterstones, Bluewater?

a) The Reggae Reggae Cookbook

b) Food For Friends

c) Caribbean Food Made Easy

To enter, simply answer the question above and send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name,

Courtesy of



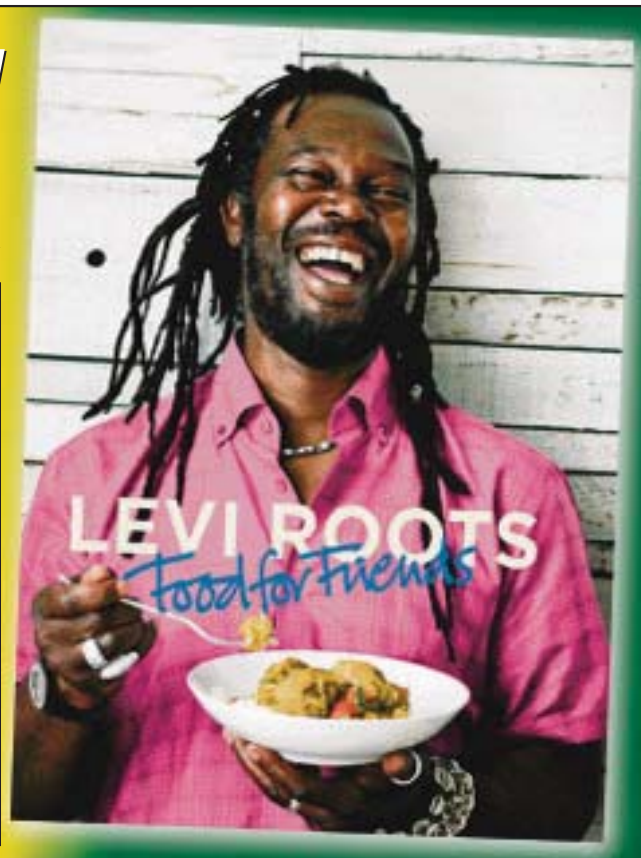
address, and daytime telephone number to Levi Roots Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

The closing date is Friday, August 30, 2010.

No purchase necessary.

For our full Terms and Conditions please visit www.kentnews.co.uk, or for a posted copy of the T&Cs call 01303 817073.

If you do not wish to receive any literature please write 'no literature' on your entry.



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Action, pace and laughs fail to help stars shine in characterless caper

■ BY DAMON SMITH

TOM Cruise and Cameron Diaz have starred in some of the most financially successful and critically acclaimed films of the past 25 years, collecting numerous awards for their efforts.

Yet put these two Hollywood superstars in the same camera shot and the results are lacklustre to say the least.

Their first collaboration, *Vanilla Sky*, an English language remake of the clever Spanish thriller *Abre Los Ojos* (*Open Your Eyes*), was confusing, illogical and uninvolved, and lacked the style and intelligence of Alejandro Amenabar's original film.

Experience

Now these two talented actors reunite for James Mangold's fast-paced action comedy that has lots of crash and bang, but almost no emotional wallop.

There is a seed of a good idea in Patrick O'Neill's screenplay but the actor turned writer doesn't yet have the experience to knit together the comedy and action elements into a fluid and coherent narrative.

Screen chemistry between the leads never catches fire, even when entire buildings are exploding around them.

June Havens (Diaz) is an unassuming Midwestern gal, who is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Boarding a flight bound for Boston, June is unexpectedly caught in the crossfire of a mid-air shoot-out between paranoid government agent Roy Miller (Cruise) and gun-toting assassins.

"I shot the first pilot, he shot the second... it's just one of those things," smirks Roy nervously.

June wakes the next morning, in her bed, believing that her high altitude adventure was



LEARNING CURVE: June Havens (Diaz) has to learn the tricks of the spy trade fast if she is to stay alive after getting caught up with government agent Roy Miller (Cruise)

nothing more than a bad dream, only for Miller to abduct her from a diner in front of would-be suitor, Rodney (Marc Blucas).

The young woman is now marked for death, and must quickly learn the tricks of the spy trade to stay alive and avoid an early grave at the hands of Antonio (Jordi Molla) and his henchmen.

Meanwhile, CIA Agent Fitzgerald (Peter Sarsgaard) attempts to persuade June that Roy is a rogue spy who must be stopped before he hands a newly-discovered perpetual energy

source to US enemies.

Knight And Day gallops across the globe, from Boston to Salzburg and finally to Seville for a spectacular finale during a bull run.

Cruise limbers up for the physical demands of *Mission: Impossible IV*, scheduled for release next summer, with a series of bruising stunt sequences and Diaz gets battered too behind the wheel of a car in the centrepiece chase.

However, it's hard to muster concern for Roy and June when the screenplay pays such scant

attention to character development.

Myriad villains are cardboard cut-outs.

The twist is heavily signposted and the stars seem to be bulletproof when it matters, emerging from the melee virtually unscathed when lesser mortals would be riddled with bullets and bound for the mortuary slab.

KNIGHT AND DAY 
Certificate 12A



A LIFE ON SHOW: Rafe Spall as Pete, whose every move is subject to scrutiny



YOUR TV REVIEW PETE VERSUS LIFE: Channel 4, 10pm, Friday

■ BY SUSAN GRIFFIN

ASIDE from the now infamous vuvuzela, the constant din of recent months has been football pundits the world over dissecting and commenting on every dive, kick and pass during the World Cup.

If you imagine the very same comment and analysis on the mundanity of your day-to-day existence, then you've got the premise of Channel 4's new comedy series *Pete Versus Life*.

At the centre of the narrative is Pete Griffiths, a struggling young sports journalist who lacks the necessary social antenna to steer him smoothly through life, resulting in him getting into all sorts of embarrassing scrapes and situations.

Unbeknown to Pete, there are two sports commentators analysing his every move and choice, as if it's an exciting sports event, complete with sports graphics and opinions from

guest stars, including sex expert Tracey Cox and relationship guru Claire Rayner.

Pete is played by Rafe Spall, the 27-year-old and son of veteran actor Timothy.

He says: "It's a really interesting premise, it hasn't been done before and he's great character."

"Pete's a sort of idiot but also quite bright at the same time and he's got a good heart, but he gets himself into terrible situations by lying most of the time."

Making Pete likeable has proved the toughest challenge.

"Even though Pete does these terrible things and he's amoral and a liar, you've still got to like him," says Rafe. "You have to want him to do well, to

get the job, to get the girl and that was a tricky conundrum to solve."

He hopes he's achieved that by having Pete remain oblivious to his own gauche nature.

"I think that's the only way you can get through it," he says. "An inspiration to me and the writers is *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. You hate Larry David but you love him as well. Everything that Larry does, even when he gets himself into terrible situations, he's doing it to help other people and later on in the series Pete's doing that. He has the best of intentions, even if he gets undone."

The first episode saw Pete impress a girl when he lied about his commitment to green issues, before wrecking the first meeting with her parents through inappropriate remarks, and giving her mother a rape alarm as a gift.



KOS 32

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The Grand Burstin Hotel is superbly located overlooking Folkestone's attractive harbour. An ideal base to take day trips to France or Belgium, the hotel arranges transport across the channel. Renowned as one of the UK's top entertainment hotels, you can dine in style and be entertained all under one roof. There's also a 12 metre indoor heated pool. There are many fun local attractions with discounts at several available, ask at reception for more details.

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99p Bar Breaks For Over 40s Only



Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

Fridays: Jan 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2011

INCLUDED:

- 99p drinks from 5pm to 11pm both nights. Drinks include house beers & spirits, wine by the glass.
- Entertainment both nights
- Meals: 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts
- Accommodation: 2 nights sharing a twin or double-bedded en-suite room

2 NIGHTS
€99^{pp}
CODE
CB1-KOS

London International Hotel

London Docklands

Sunday, Jan 2, 2011

INCLUDED:

- 99p drinks from 7pm to 11pm both nights. Drinks include house beers & spirits, wine by the glass.
- Entertainment both nights
- Meals: 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts
- Accommodation: 2 nights sharing a twin or double-bedded en-suite room

2 NIGHTS
€119^{pp}
CODE
CL1-KOS

You cannot book these breaks direct with Britannia Hotels

Be drink aware - abuse of alcohol can damage your health - www.drinkaware.co.uk

You cannot book these breaks direct with Warner Hotels

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All-Inclusive* Breaks - For Over 40s

These unique breaks all include a **FREE BAR** from 3.30pm to 11pm on Friday & 12 noon to 11pm on Saturday & Sunday for tea/coffee, pumped soft drinks & mixers, house wine by the glass, house beers & spirits (MM11 Free Bar from 6pm to 11pm daily)

- 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts (*lunch not included)

Christmas Party - Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

Norton Grange, the friendly Warner Resort on the seafront at Yarmouth, on the Isle of Wight, is ideal for our unique fun-filled Christmas Party - **for over 40s only** - featuring cabaret and variety entertainment, good food, great entertainment and a Free Bar every day - perfect for a pre-Christmas get together.

PRICE INCLUDES: FREE BAR • Car ferry • Full programme of variety entertainment and activities • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • 3 nights sharing a twin or double bedded en-suite chalet - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool, sauna, jacuzzi



3 NIGHTS FROM
€199^{pp}
Friday 5 to
8 Nov, 2010
CODE
NG11-KOS

Mamma Mia Christmas Party - Bembridge Coast, Isle of Wight

3 NIGHTS FROM
€259^{pp}
Nov 12 to 15
2010
CODE
MM11-KOS



Join us for a unique Mamma Mia Christmas Party on the Isle of Wight - **for over 50s only**. Warner's Bembridge Coast Hotel will resound to the sights and sounds of Abba with nightly entertainment, a screening of **Mamma Mia the Movie**, an Abba tribute act playing live and a mammoth fireworks display.

PRICE INCLUDES: FREE BAR 6pm to 11pm daily • Car ferry • Entertainment including a **Mamma Mia the Movie** screening, **Abba tribute act** & fireworks display • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • 3 nights sharing an Ambassador room - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool & sauna

Carry on New Year Party - Sinah Warren, Hayling Island

3 NIGHTS FROM
€229^{pp}
Friday 7 to
10 Jan, 2011
CODE
WS1-KOS



Here's an opportunity to extend the New Year celebrations at Warner's luxury hotel on Hayling Island. There'll be live entertainment every night and, to help the party go with a swing there's Free Drinks too.

PRICE INCLUDES: FREE BAR • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Full programme of entertainment & activities • 3 nights sharing a twin or double bedded Ambassador room - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool & sauna

Come Dancing Party - Bembridge Coast, Isle of Wight

Enjoy ballroom and Latin dancing, tuition for beginners and improvers, top dancers in cabaret, a Grand Ball & variety entertainment - **all for over 40s only**. And with an 8,860sq ft dance floor, you won't be short of space. There's plenty going on for non-dancers too.

PRICE INCLUDES: FREE BAR • Car ferry • Full programme of entertainment & Dancing in association with Philip Wylie of Holiday & Dance • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • 3 nights sharing a twin or double bedded Ambassador room - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool & sauna



3 NIGHTS FROM
€259^{pp}
Friday 14 to
17 Jan, 2011
CODE
WB1-KOS

UP TO 10 HOURS OF
DANCE
SESSIONS

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ABTA Y0291

yourmusic

Festival becomes stuff of folklore



FESTIVAL FEVER: Pama International are on the line-up for Broadstairs Folk Week

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

FOLK fans should head to Broadstairs for the final few days of the annual music festival.

Hundreds of acts have played at venues in the seaside town since the seven-day festival opened last week and plenty more will do so before the curtain is brought down by Ade Edmondson and his Bad Shepherds this Friday night.

Other big names in the folk and country scene due to play in Broadstairs include Doug Hudson, Pama International and Dronhe (all performing tonight) Three Sheets to the Wind, Jeff Warner and Martin Simpson (tomorrow) and Moondance, Derek Gifford and Monroe's Revenge (all playing on Friday).

Some of the attractions will require tickets, but many are free, as the town's venues come alive with a host of activities, from workshops to a craft fair.

There is a campsite a few minutes' walk from the town centre, but the more casual enthusiast can turn up any time of day for a wander around the charming streets to take in the atmosphere.

A Folk Week spokesman said: "During Folk Week, life in

Broadstairs really is set to music. In the parks, pubs, gardens and on the beaches and promenade there really is a festival vibe in the town.

"Everyone has a different Folk Week – ask 50 people what is their favourite part of the festival and they will each tell you something completely different.

"Whether you are a family looking for child-friendly events, the younger generation wanting to burn off some dance energy or singers and musicians seeking out a session, Folk Week has something for you."

LINE-UP

Today

Doug Hudson
Pama International
Dronhe
The Shee
Steve Turner

Tomorrow

BouGaRaBou
Trevor Stephenson
Martin Simpson
Boka Halat
Chris Sherburn and Denny Bartley

Friday

Moondance
Ade Edmondson and The Bad Shepherds
Bob Hall
Derek Gifford
Monroe's Revenge

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MUSIC FESTIVAL: A montage from this year's Lounge on the Farm.

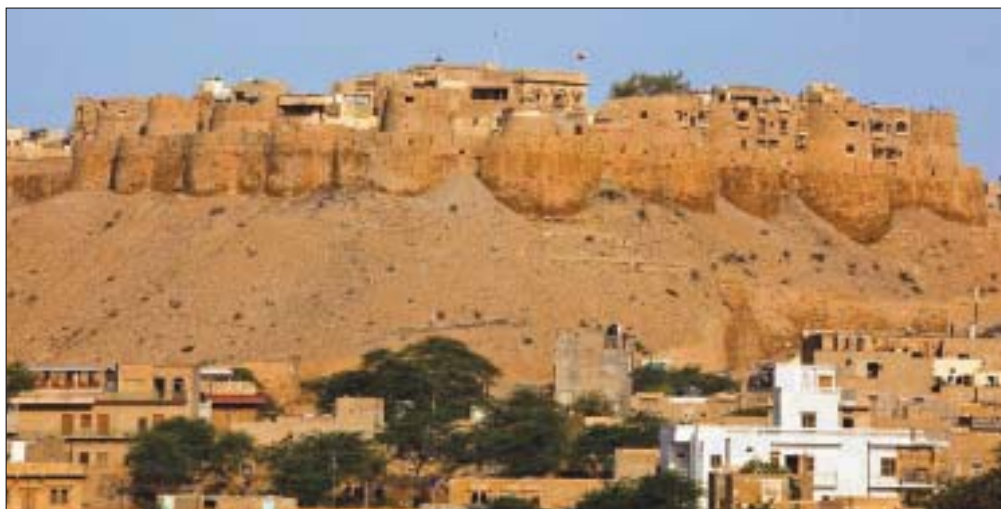


BAND PRACTICE: Zinta Egle and her band play Love With No Love.



KENT UNSIGNED CHART

- 1 Craig Sheridan - Times Change, Deal
- 2 Craig Sheridan - Winter Sunn, Bexley
- 3 The Flack - Forget Me, Deal
- 4 Ron Bowdery - This is Kelpie, New Eltham
- 5 Poppy Wilson - Carbon Copy, Maidstone



INDIAN SUMMER: The magnificent Mehrangarh Fort towers over the city in the deserts of Rajasthan, known as the Land of the Kings

yourgetaways



Opulence meets deprivation in the deserts of Rajasthan

■ BY LIAM CREEDON

The Thar Desert, carpeting the emptiness of India's North West, is a vast, desolate, sand-blasted expanse, dominating Rajasthan – the Land of the Kings.

Here are some of India's most awe-inspiring natural and man-made spectacles, and travellers can explore this wilderness in a style befitting the Maharajas.

Built by the region's leading family, the Rathores, 600 years ago, the fort boasts opulent pleasure palaces, secluded courtyards and spiked, elephant-proof gates, providing the Maharajas with protection and a limitless view over their dust-blown kingdom – Marwar, the land of death.

And it is from the stomach-churning height of the fort that visitors experience a cultural revelation. The toy town far below appears to be blue.

Hundreds of rectangular, flat-roofed buildings have been daubed various shades of this colour, which denotes the home of a Brahmin – the highest caste.

In the city streets, life explodes in the cramped alleyways of the old town. Sacred cows nibble rubbish in doorways, bare-footed children vault open sewers, quick-fingered langur monkeys are chased from market stalls by kohl-eyed beauties veiled behind crimson saris.

Streets throb to the popping cough of motorised rickshaws, revving motorbikes, and conversations roar over the hullabaloo.

The delicious tang of cooking jalebis mixes with sewage, exhaust fumes and incense to form a thick gauze of scent, as appealing as it is appalling.

The chic Raas Hotel provides luxury and tranquility only yards from this chaotic excitement.

FACT FILE: INDIA

Time difference	+Five hours (GMT)
Capital	New Delhi
Population	1.8 billion
Currency	Indian Rupee
Climate	Varied

Liam Creedon was a guest of Bales Worldwide. An eight-day Rajasthan itinerary costs from £2,745, including two nights at The Serai in Jaisalmer and two nights at the Rass in Jodhpur. Package includes return international/internal flights with Jet Airways, private transfers, sightseeing and some meals. Bales reservations: 0845 057 0600 and www.balesworldwide.com. British Airways connecting flights ex-Glasgow, Manchester from £42 each way.



Built in Jodhpur's signature rose-red sandstone, the boutique hotel boasts stunning sunset views of the Mehrangarh Fort glowering above. The muezzin's call to prayer echoes from the pastel rooftops as the fort glows in the sinking desert sun.

South of the city, the Mihirgarh Resort is opulent too: within the ochre, mud-styled battlements are nine luxury suites and a mini-temple, a perfect romantic hideaway.

But Rajasthan's soul lies in the desert, and many visitors explore the Thar's mystery from the back of a camel.

Getting on is the hard part: vaulting your leg over their tent-sized backs can demand bodily contortions.

But once you've conquered this irascible, spitting troublemaker, the animal rapidly propels you to the perfect height from which to appreciate the acacia-fringed sparseness of the dunes as they melt from gold to rust in the sinking sun.

You then spend a night under the star-smudged desert sky.

The area around Manvar is the spiritual home to the opium ceremony used by Rajput, Bishnoi and Marwari communities in the desert environs of Jodhpur.

Life is harsh in scattered desert villages. Precious seeds, grain and gourds prized from the earth are stacked carefully in mounds, while villages raise money by allowing tourists to inspect their way of life.

Further west, the city of Jaisalmer emerges from the desert like a dream. In the heat haze, it shimmers like a giant, mustard-coloured trifle.

Within 60 miles of the Pakistan border, the city is more brash and showy than Jodhpur.

Honey-hued sandstone lends Jaisalmer the title of "Golden City". Enclosed by a fort, the old town rises 80 metres into the air and is encrusted with endless battlements.

Inside, mind-bogglingly ornate Jain temples and sprawling havelis – merchants' homes – resemble a living museum.

This was India's magnetic, riotous pull and I was hooked.

MOTORS NEWS



Vauxhall raises stakes with lifetime warranty

AN ALL-OUT warranty war is on the cards after Vauxhall's offer of a 'lifetime warranty' on its cars, including the popular UK-built Astra.

To be precise, it applies to the first owner of the car and the first 100,000 miles, though Vauxhall says it has plans to allow second owners to purchase the warranty.

However, it is still the most comprehensive guarantee on the market and a riposte to the major peace of mind offers from Kia (seven years/100,000 miles), Hyundai (five/unlimited) and Toyota (five/100,000).



Yeti scales the heights with awards accolade

SKODA'S Yeti crossover/SUV was named Car of the Year at the prestigious Auto Express magazine awards.

The top prize was one of five earned by the Czech manufacturer, with magazine editor David Johns praising the Yeti's versatility as both possible off-roader and compact MPV, without demanding "the dynamic or financial compromises usually associated with either."

He added: "The Skoda Yeti (from £13,990) mixes tough Tonka toy looks, sharp handling and a high-quality and spacious cabin with the brand's famed value-for-money pricing and service."



Ferrari's pocket-rocket is the ultimate tribute

FANCY a cut-price Ferrari? Then check out this £30,000 Ferrari version of the Fiat 500, made by the Italian marque's sporting arm, Abarth.

Known as the 695 Tributo Ferrari, just 152 right-hand examples will be sold in the UK, complete with classic Ferrari red livery, carbon wing mirrors and grey alloys and front air intakes.

A 180bhp 1.4-litre turbocharged engine takes the pocket rocket to 62mph in seven seconds and a top speed of 140mph, yet it can still average more than 40mpg.



TOO CLEVER BY HALF: The Smart ForTwo cdi's green credentials are beyond doubt and it is a design masterpiece – yet the diesel engine (inset) provides a gruff and lumpy ride

Diesel not such a Smart move – and here's why

APART from the few electric cars around, Smart's diesel version of its distinctive ForTwo coupe is the greenest production car on UK roads.

It offers parity on CO2 emissions with that paragon of eco-motoring, the Toyota Prius, and betters its average fuel consumption by around five mpg.

You could also buy two for the price of the Toyota and dodge around town and park more easily – providing you don't have to carry more than two people.

But a petrol Smart is an even smarter choice; the diesel (from £9,440) might be a masterpiece of compact engineering, but it's gruff and lumpy, especially when cold.

And it hates accelerating; the official time to 62mph is 16.8 seconds, but that seems optimistic and you soon learn to throttle back anyway to ease the racket.

If the diesel has a virtue, it is the extra weight deadening the pitching effect allowed by the car's short wheelbase when changing gear automatically. Familiarity with any

ROAD TEST SMART FORTWO cdi

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

Smart teaches you to back off the throttle just before the gearbox changes up anyway, but I prefer to select the gears manually and let the car self-select only when in slow moving traffic. Despite its relative height, a Smart does not roll into bends as you might expect either and the diesel is even better planted.

Nevertheless, with the extra wear and tear on tyres and mechanicals – not to mention the nerves – it makes it hard to recommend the diesel to any but the committed town dweller.

And as many Smarts are bought as cheap-to-run second cars and consequently do fewer miles, this also argues against the fuel savings of the dearer diesel – just buy the petrol version. The Smart range now has a proper boot, with roll-top parcel shelf and two-part opening. For light items, you simply lift the glass upper tailgate; if loading bulkier stuff, you then drop the main tailgate – it is the perfect shopping trolley.

Unfortunately, a 20cm/eight inch increase in length stops you parking nose or tail into the kerb – the car seems to jut out just too far for comfort – and prices start at nearly £8,680, which is more than enough for a decent four-seat city car like the Fiat Panda.



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08 08 FORD FIESTA 1.4 Style TDCi, Turbo Diesel, 5 Dr, Silver, 1 Owner, 37,000 Miles, £30 per yr Road Tax	£5,795
05 55 FORD FOCUS GHIA 1.6 TDCi TURBO DIESEL, Air con, Alloy wheels, Metallic black	£5,795
07 07 FORD FIESTA 1.25 Style, 5 dr, 1 owner, 30,000mils only	£5,595
07 57 FORD FIESTA 1.2 Style, Climate Air Con, Silver, 20,000 Miles.....	Only £5,295
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2, 1.4, 2008, black, 55 miles, £13100, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

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2, TS2, 2008, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows full service history immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power steering trip computer twin airbags remote central locking isofix child seat points remote audio controls, aurora, 13888 miles, £8000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

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PROPERTY NEWS

Sellers drop prices as supply beats demand

HOMEOWNERS coming on to the market have dropped their asking prices for the first time this year, according to Rightmove.

The website is currently accommodating an additional 30,000 properties a week, up 45 per cent compared to a year ago, and its latest Consumer Confidence Survey indicates that home-mover sentiment is "faltering".

The number of unsold homes per estate agent jumped by almost 25 per cent in the first half of 2010, as a surge in new sellers outstripped new mortgage approvals.

Commercial director, Miles Shipside, said: "Estate agents are suffering from podgy portfolios, and buyers' fitness to purchase is in correspondingly poor shape."

"With agents beginning to choke on a surfeit of new stock, sellers are going to have to price at bargain levels and bullishly promote their properties in order to stand out from the crowd."

According to Mr Shipside, sellers who act quickly could still benefit from some of the price gains made in the last 18 months, but they must market their properties realistically from the outset.

New regulations could hit mortgage providers

THE introduction of new regulations to encourage responsible lending among mortgage providers is ill-timed, according to a leading industry body.

Responding to a consultation paper on the changes released by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the Association of Mortgage Intermediaries (AMI) said it was concerned about the cumulative impact of the new rules.

AMI director Robert Sinclair explained: "Our main concern remains the timing of these changes and the further risk that we will make many families either property or mortgage prisoners."

"We are also concerned that we are seeing piece-meal introduction of the proposals, with aspects such as transitional arrangements not yet ready for consultation."

The proposals form part of a major review of the mortgage industry by the FSA, which is keen to impose affordability tests introduced for all mortgages to make the lender responsible for assessing a customer's ability to pay.



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Lending crisis blamed for new fall in prices

■ BY NICK AMES

HOUSE prices fell 0.5 per cent in July for the first time since February, data from Nationwide's monthly house price index has shown.

Nationwide said this was due to the low number of properties changing hands across the UK, which is still running at only half the levels seen prior to the financial crisis and recession.

Average UK house prices in July were £169,347. The annual change has slipped from June's figure of 8.7 per cent to 6.6 per cent.

Demand from homebuyers has made little progress in building upon the recovery seen during much of 2009.

Martin Gahbauer, chief executive at Nationwide, blamed this on a combination of restrictive credit conditions and uncertainty about the future economic outlook.

He said: "Many potential buyers still lack the confidence to purchase their first home or trade up when faced with uncertainty over future income and employment prospects."

Although Mr Gahbauer is encouraged by the strong economic growth seen in April to June of 1.1 per cent, he said concerns about the medium-term impact of fiscal austerity on personal finances outweighs any potential optimism.

He said: "It will take several months to establish whether house prices are now simply oscillating around a flat price trend or whether a period of downward trending prices may be in store."

Bank of England figures show that mortgage approvals fell more than expected in



June and overall lending slowed, offering further evidence that the housing market is running out of steam following price rises last year.

The bank said net mortgage lending growth slowed to £665m in June from May's £838m while mortgage approvals fell to 47,643 in June from 49,461 in May.

"This is the first time the annual rate has turned negative since April last year, but it is

likely to remain so in future months as comparison is made with a stronger market towards the end of last year," said Paul Samter of the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

"Remortgaging activity also remains at exceptionally subdued levels. The low demand is being driven both by the lack of demand among existing borrowers enjoying low rates, and tighter criteria that may be constraining borrowers who do wish to remortgage."

Don't be taken in by rogue traders offering 'good deals'

THE Office of Fair Trading is warning people that summer is peak time for rogue traders who offer home maintenance work on the doorstep.

In 2009, the government-funded advice service, Consumer Direct, received more than 5,300 complaints over such offers of work, a 16 per cent rise from the previous year.

Complaints peaked from July through to the autumn, with rogue doorstep traders often encouraging people into making hasty decisions by offering attractive rates

and using persuasive sales techniques.

Roofing jobs received the most complaints followed by tarmac and paving.

The OFT offers advice on how to avoid being scammed.

A spokesman said: "If a trader knocks at your door do not agree to on-the-spot house repairs, or sign anything on the spot."

"Be wary of special offers or warnings that your house is unsafe."

"Do not make snap decisions. Take time to talk to someone you trust before you make a decision."



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Offers in excess of £170,000

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West Malling



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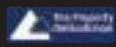


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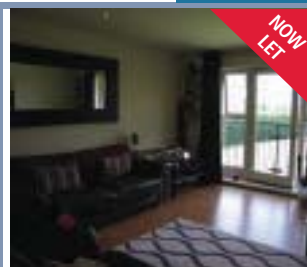
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Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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CRICKET

BY TOM HOWARD

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

Lordswood 1st XI v The Mote 1st XI

THE Mote remain in the hunt for a top-three finish after recording a convincing eight-wicket win at Lordswood.

Skipper Tom Harvey predicted his side would feature at the sharp end of the Premier Division this season and they have not disappointed. Saturday's impressive win kept their faint title hopes alive and closed the gap to second-placed St Lawrence & Highland Court to just seven points.

Lordswood batted first and the hosts began brightly as Christopher Vernon attacked from the outset. The opener dominated the scoring early on with a rapid 38 before being trapped leg before by Glenn Aukett.

Peter Stock took over the impetus for Lordswood and he provided significant resistance to The Mote's bowling attack before falling three runs short of a half century. The innings unravelled late on, with Harvey, Tom Parsons and James Hodgson all taking wickets.

The victory target of 168 always looked realistic and The Mote duly delivered in style. Kent bowler Matt Coles led the charge as he blasted five sixes in a knock of 87, which came from just 51 balls.

Harvey had played a supporting role in the 115 partnership with Coles but took over after his departure. The opener was 60 not out alongside James Marriott (19) when the victory was sealed in only the 29th over.

The Mote will hope to continue their form when they come up against league leaders Bromley this Saturday.

Comfortable win sees Mote heading for top



AIMING FOR THE TOP: Mote batsmen put in a commanding performance away at Lordswood, securing yet another victory

SCORE CARD

Lordswood 1st XI

	Runs
Alan Pattenden ct Fordham b George	1
Christopher Vernon lbw b Aukett	38
Lyndon Lockhart lbw b Coles	17
Chris Piesley ct Aukett b Harvey	7
Peter Stock ct Paget b Hodgson	47
Richard Piesley ct Fordham b Parsons	22
Mohamed Dada ct Harvey b Parsons	3
Matt Greenwood lbw b Hodgson	15
John Williams ct Aukett b Hodgson	2
Jack Laraman ct Aukett b Harvey	0
Darren Scott not out	1
Extras (1b 3lb 9w1nb)	14
Total (all out, 46.3 overs)	167

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Tom Parsons	10	2	43	2
Kenny George	5	1	21	1
Matthew Coles	8	1	34	1
Glenn Aukett	10	1	26	1
Thomas Harvey	10	1	25	2
James Marriott	2	0	12	0
James Hodgson	1.3	0	2	3

The Mote 1st XI

	Runs
Matthew Coles st Piesley b Laraman	87
Thomas Harvey not out	60
James Hodgson lbw b Laraman	0
James Marriott not out	19
Alex Fordham did not bat	
Matthew White did not bat	
Caspian Paget did not bat	
Chris Back did not bat	
Glenn Aukett did not bat	
Tom Parsons did not bat	
Kenny George did not bat	
Extras (2b 1lb 2w)	5
Total (2 wickets, 28.5 overs)	171

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Matt Greenwood	5	1	33	0
Chris Piesley	8	1	40	0
Darren Scott	6	1	25	0
John Williams	2	0	17	0
Lyndon Lockhart	1	0	14	0
Jack Laraman	6	1	27	2
Christopher Vernon	0.5	0	12	0

LOCAL CRICKET ROUND-UP

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION THREE

Addington Village 1st XI v Linden Park 1st XI

ADDINGTON Village have dropped from first to fourth in Division Four after suffering a 38-run defeat to title rivals Linden Park.

The visitors, aided by a half century from Abhijit Kale (56), reached 180 from their 50 overs and looked well-placed to challenge for victory.

Ray Van Schoor gave Addington a positive start to their run chase but a middle order collapse severely dented their progress.

The hosts were unable to cope with Linden's bowlers and were dismissed for 142 with seven overs to spare.

Linden Park CC 1st XI

	Runs
William Thomas	15
John Harvey	13
Alexander McDonald	0
Abhijit Kale	56
Dominic Lanaway	11
Stuart Clarke	1
Matthew Withers	28
Michael Brown	26
Ben Cobb	5
Ben Entacott	3
James Saunders	not out
Extras (14b 1lb 6w 1nb)	22
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs)	180

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Tom Nissen	12	6	20	1
Phil Blakeburn	8	3	23	2
Nik Robinson	3	0	13	0
Ben Buet	8	2	20	1
Steve Gunner	6	2	15	1
Ray Van Schoor	7	0	43	1
Duncan Brown	6	1	28	2

Addington Village 1st XI

	Runs
Ray Van Schoor	49
James Tooze	7
Ben Buet	0
Will Jeffery	0
Duncan Brown	10
Mark Rimmer	11
Nik Robinson	4
Tom Nissen	20
Steve Gunner	1
James Fullagar	12
Phil Blakeburn	0
Extras (8b 7lb 10w 3nb)	28
Total (all out, 43 overs)	142

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Ben Entacott	15	1	41	3
Dominic Lanaway	12	0	39	3
Ben Cobb	6	2	12	1
John Harvey	10	0	35	2

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER 2ND XI

The Mote 2nd XI v Lordswood 2nd XI

FIVE ducks summed up the level of The Mote 2nd XI's batting performance as they were dealt a six-wicket defeat by Lordswood 2nd XI.

The Mote's innings started brightly, with Warren Jackson hitting a half century, but the damage was done at the other end, as the next six batsmen fell for just 12. The tail recovered somewhat but it left The Mote all-out for 129.

With a relatively low total to beat, Lordswood had plenty of time to score the required runs and they cruised to victory after 24.1 overs. Shaun Piesley top scored with 37.

The Mote 2nd XI

	Runs
Warren Jackson	54
Peter Bowles	0
Daniel Thirkell	0
Howard Waters	12
Laurence Waters	0
Danny Rowe	0
Houssain Johnston	0
Simon Higgins	17
Ed De Lucy	15
Rajeevan Raveendran	18
Arifullah Afmat	2
Extras (4b 4lb 2w 1nb)	11
Total (all out, 47.2 overs)	129

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Kevin Masters	10	2	32	2
Bradley Killick	9	1	18	1
Jonathan Prince	7	4	8	2
Paul Richards	7	1	24	2
Thomas Davis	8	3	21	0
Philip Mayes	6.2	1	18	3

Lordswood 2nd XI

	Runs
Nathan Moore	21
Mark Wilson	10
Paul Richards	11
Matthew Wilson	16
Shaun Piesley	37
Laurence Frost	0
Kevin Masters	did not bat
Jonathan Prince	did not bat
Phil Nissen	did not bat
Thomas Davis	did not bat
Bradley Killick	did not bat
Extras (1b 6lb 29w 2nb)	38
Total (4 wickets, 24.1 overs)	133

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Daniel Thirkell	8	1	26	2
Arifullah Afmat	3.1	0	36	1
Laurence Waters	10	1	37	1
Ed De Lucy	3	0	27	0

KENT REGIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP EAST

Frindsbury 1st XI v Yalding 1st XI

AN IMPRESSIVE display from Yalding's bowling attack helped them complete a five-wicket win against Frindsbury.

Frindsbury batted first, but they were never allowed to settle at the crease and set a solid run rate. Jumshad Haider, Anthony Shepherd, Mohammad Waseem and Dushyanth Gnanappiragasam all took wickets as they bowled the hosts out for only 85.

Yalding made hard work of surpassing the low total, but Shepherd managed to hit the all-important winning runs in the 29th over.

Frindsbury 1st XI

	Runs
Peter Blackman	2
Robert Sait	5
Sam Dudgeon	0
Selwin Fisher	6
Adam Loynds	0
Samuel Gracey	28
Laurence Claughton	16
Sam Budd	0
Chris Mumford	7
Peter Elswood	1
Mark Gracey	not out
Extras (3b 6lb 4w)	13
Total (all out, 34 overs)	85

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Dushyanth Gnanappiragasam	9	1	21	2
Jumshad Haider	7	1	26	3
Anthony Shepherd	6	1	11	2
Mohammad Waseem	9	5	11	3
Blesson Ethackadu	3	1	7	0

Yalding 1st XI

	Runs
Marty Hollis	29
Alistair Ratcliff	10
Joel Shopland	19
Graham Hutchins	6
Mohammad Waseem	10
Anthony Shepherd	10
Jumshad Haider	0
Dushyanth Gnanappiragasam	did not bat
Jack Nyren	did not bat
Rory High	did not bat
Blesson Ethackadu	did not bat
Extras (2b 3w)	5
Total (5 wickets, 28.2 overs)	89

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Chris Mumford	9.2	3	31	1
Sam Dudgeon	3	0	14	0
Selwin Fisher	7	1	23	0
Mark Gracey	6	3	7	3
Peter Elswood	3	0	12	1

KENT REGIONAL LEAGUE 1A CENTRAL

Holcombe 1st XI v Leeds & Broomfield 1st XI

AN UNBEATEN century from Martin McCague guided Leeds & Broomfield to a crushing 158-run win at Holcombe.

McCague's time at the crease set up the win, with his 122 making up more than half of his sides' total of 221. John Hartshorn was the next highest scorer with 25.

Leeds & Broomfield wasted little time in defending their score as Geoff Hunt and Adrian Samson ripped through Holcombe. The pair took seven wickets between them on the way to bowling the hosts out for 63.

Leeds & Broomfield 1st XI

	Runs
Aaron Bailey	12
Martin McCague	122
John Hartshorn	25
Chris Davis	10
Geoff Hunt	10
Max Aitken	10
Anton Martin	did not bat
James Ingarfield	did not bat
Richard Turner	did not bat
James Longhurst	did not bat
Adrian Samson	did not bat
Extras	32
Total (4 wickets, 46 overs)	221

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Dion Davis	12	7	26	2
Tom Dix	12	0	80	1
Colin Dix	11	2	46	0
Aaron Wadhams	11	2	44	1

Holcombe 1st XI

	Runs
Kevin Shipton	3
Mark Harvey	6
Aaron Wadhams	7
Colin Dix	0
Dion Davis	11
Tom Dix	10
Adam Carter	13
Ben Poppy	4
Tim Greenwood	2
Maurice Mulyre	did not bat
Extras	3
Total (all out, 30.4 overs)	63

Bowlers	0	M	R	W
Geoff Hunt	12	4	18	3
Adrian Samson	12	5	32	4
James Longhurst	3	3	0	0
Anton Martin	3.4	0	12	1

Chairman denies merger or claims of name change

PAUL Bowden-Brown has categorically denied that Maidstone United's decision to stay at Homelands in the wake of Ashford Town's collapse is the precursor to either a merger, or a change of name to "Ashford United".

Some Stones fans reacted angrily when it was announced last Wednesday that the club would not be moving back to Sittingbourne's Bourne Park, with some threatening to boycott home games and others suggesting that a merger was possible.

But Maidstone chairman Bowden-Brown laughed off the latter idea and claimed the decision to stay at Homelands was in the best interests of the club.

"Anybody who thinks I'm going to merge the club or change the name has got to be joking," he said. "On my life, what's left of it, I have given the last 20 years to Maidstone United. All I want to do is see it come home and if I can't do that then I want somebody else to be in a position to do it."

Bowden-Brown said that the deal was financially far better for Maidstone than moving back to Bourne Park, their home from 2001 to 2009, and that it would be easier for a future owner to attract investment if the club remains at Homelands.

David Folb, owner of the Lashings cricket Club, is hoping to mount a rescue bid, and held preliminary talks with the club last

FOOTBALL

■ BY FRED ATKINS

week. Folb has charged former Stones player Glenn Aitken with handling negotiations with Bowden-Brown.

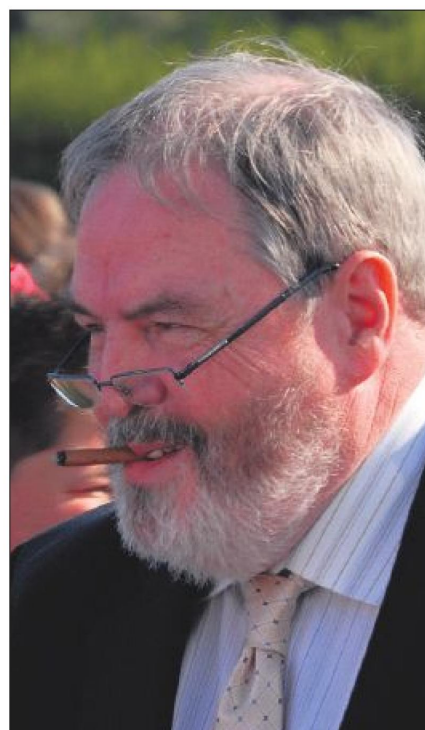
Aitken, a former Gravesend & Northfleet chief executive, met informally with club representatives last Wednesday night and has also had preliminary discussions with Bowden-Brown, who reiterated his desire to step down last week.

"I want to get out," he said. "I've done my bit, (the takeover) is what I'm working towards and I'm not going to stand in anyone's way. Administration is not an option, we will get through this one way or the other."

"I hope supporters will see Glenn's involvement as positive news, but we've also got to make sure that any deal keeps Oliver Ash (who owns 25 per cent of the club's shares) happy."

Maidstone United's poor pre-season form continued on Saturday with a 1-0 defeat at Faversham Town. The game was decided by a penalty on 42 minutes when Dave Botterill's free-kick was handled by Adam Marsh. Danny Hunt tucked away the spot kick.

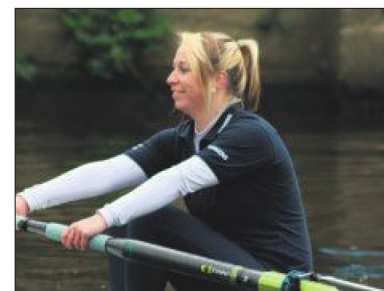
Maidstone were in action away to Whitstable Town last night, log on to www.yourmaidstone.co.uk for the report and reaction. United play their final pre-season game this Saturday at Chatham Town.



Picture: STEVE TERRELL

STANDING FIRM: Stones chairman Paul Bowden-Brown

ROWING



STROKE OF LUCK: Kelsie Gibson has received funds

Kelsie rows towards her 2012 Paralympics

ADAPTIVE rower Kelsie Gibson has been awarded funding from the Jaguar Academy of Sport to boost her hopes of featuring in the London 2012 Paralympics.

The 16-year-old Maidstone rower was one of 35 recipients from across the country presented with £2,000 of funding from the organisation, which aims to help nurture some of the nation's talented young athletes.

Gibson, who rows for Maidstone Rowing Club, only took up the sport just over a year ago but has made rapid progress. The Maidstone Girls Grammar School pupil won the Kent Adaptive Rowing Championships last year and has since been included in the Great Britain squad.

She made her debut for Great Britain in May's Varese International Regatta in Italy and helped her crew to two gold medals, beating squads from Ireland, Russia, Germany and Italy. The performance has made her a prime candidate for the London 2012 Paralympics.

No podium finish for Smart at Brands



STRUGGLED: Scott Smart came ninth at the British Superstock Championships

SCOTT Smart ended his run of four races without a points finish with ninth place in the British Superstock Championship at Brands Hatch.

The 35-year-old Maidstone-born superbike rider was desperate to record a result after a poor run of results and although he would have hoped to feature on the podium, he was grateful for a clutch of points on Sunday.

Smart, riding for Moto Rapido Ducati, started the weekend struggling to match the pace set by the front-runners and qualified 11th on the grid.

SUPERBIKES

After a poor getaway from the line, Smart picked off riders throughout the race to eventually cross the finish line in ninth and pick up seven championship points.

Fellow Maidstone rider Steve Mercer, who made a wild card appearance, finished in 24th place.

Elsewhere, Tom Weeden was unable to record the elusive podium he has been searching for all season in the British 125cc

Championship.

The 16-year-old gave himself a lot of work to do in the race to secure his maiden class podium by qualifying 24th on the grid of 40 riders. However, his luck turned with a lightning start to the race, as he managed to make up six positions on the opening lap.

Weeden dropped back by the mid-way point but a strong finish saw him end the race in 18th overall and 12th in class.

Smart and Weeden will be back in action at Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire on August 30.

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Gills boss Andy Hessenthaler gives an update on squad's injured players

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